

## *Palestine: fair test for UN*

UN's Security Council was trying to unscrew the inscrutable last week as it studied the call for armed support presented to it by the Palestine Commission. Unless an adequate non-Palestinian force is on hand to assist the Commission and law-abiding elements in both the Arab and Jewish communities after the British withdrawal on May 15, implementing of the Assembly's partition decision will be out of the question and, on the contrary, strife and bloodshed will reach unprecedented proportions. The Commission cited the announced plans of Arab elements, within and without Palestine, to resist by force any attempt to carry out partition. Since November's vote touched off the violence, 2,778 Arabs and Jews, as well as British soldiers and others, have been killed in attacks and reprisals. Thus face to face with an embarrassing and onerous political and military problem it had hoped to avoid, the Security Council postponed discussion of the report until the home governments could be consulted. Those home governments, and notably Washington, saw before them unpleasant consequences, no matter which way they turned. And most commentators agreed that the enforcement of partition is the severest test that the Organization has yet had to face. Pleading for consistency, one such commentator, Sumner Welles, said: "If the United Nations is in fact the foundation of American policy, the United States must support the United Nations not only when that is convenient and easy but quite as much so when such support implies effort, sacrifice and risk." In this case, at least, the United Nations cannot be excused for inaction by blaming a Soviet veto, since the USSR is equally committed through its vote in the Assembly as well as through its position on the Council to carry out the decision, by armed force if necessary. It would be far more desirous, think observers, if the Soviet Union were jointly participant in the enforcement than if the Kremlin were given the opportunity to make political capital as a result of sole American intervention in Palestine. If partition is the severest test, it is also the fairest that the United Nations has yet confronted.

## *Russia's reply on the documents*

"You're another" is about the best reply Moscow's Soviet Information Bureau could contrive after brooding for nineteen days over the publication of "Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941." Including wild charges—such as the story of negotiations for a separate peace with Germany, conducted supposedly by Lord Beaverbrook's son when he was shooting Nazi bombers flying, possibly, on Soviet gasoline—the Russian propaganda makes three major claims: 1) that a "golden rain of American dollars fertilized the heavy industry of Hitler Germany"; 2) that "ruling circles in England and France renounced

collective security"; and 3) "essentially Anglo-French policy was aimed at isolating the Soviet Union," making it the object of Nazi aggression. It would be a hardy soul who would argue the wisdom displayed by our bankers in their international loans, but memory reports rumors of a Depression that made foreign bonds somehow unappealing in the 1930's, and the record shows no evidence of any loan to Germany after Hitler came to power. England's guarantee to Poland a few months before Stalin and Hitler cynically partitioned that hapless country might be called quixotic; it can hardly be counted as goading Hitler to attack Russia. History has demonstrated that there was possibility of a collective-security policy with the Soviets only at the price of surrender to their immense territorial aspirations which, as the Voice of America has been reminding the world, "have been pursued ever since, whenever an opportunity presented itself."

## *Non-communist affidavits*

To anti-communist labor leaders, one of the most galling provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act is the requirement for filing non-communist affidavits. They feel in this matter the way an ordinary, law-abiding citizen might feel who would be forced, as a condition, say, of starting a business, to swear that he is not a thief, an extortionist or a racketeer. It was not surprising, then, when the venerable head of the AFL, William Green, sharply challenged a statement on non-communist affidavits made by Senator Taft during an appearance at South Bend, Indiana. In that unionized town, the Ohio Senator announced that the non-communist affidavit clause was working very effectively; that, indeed, so a friend told him, a number of communist labor leaders had been forced to shut up shop and go to Canada to carry on operations. Apropos of which said Mr. Green:

Of all the far-fetched flights of imagination, Senator Robert A. Taft's fable about the Taft-Hartley Act driving Communists in the labor movement out of the U.S. into Canada should become a classic.

As one whose duties make it imperative to keep a close watch on the activities of Communists in the labor movement, I can state categorically that I do not know and have not heard of a single one who emigrated to Canada recently.

The AFL leader went on to charge that "far from driving the Communists out of unions and out of the country, the Taft-Hartley Act gives them legal protection to carry on their nefarious activities without fear of reprisal." Such, he held, was the effect of that provision of the Act which prevents a union with a union-shop contract from obtaining the discharge of a worker except for non-payment of dues. While the Communists are, indeed, hard pressed these days in the CIO, their embarrassment is due in only a very minor way to the T-H Act. As the right-

wingers push their advantage, they feel grateful not to Senator Taft, but to Uncle Joe Stalin, Secretary Marshall and that self-styled leader of a Gideon's army, Henry Wallace. These are the men who have unwittingly helped them to smoke the Stalinists out.

### **Miss Smith of PS 168**

When her associates and the community honored Miss Kathleen Smith earlier this month on the eve of her retirement from more than fifty years of teaching in the same school—Public School 168, on East 105th St. in the Harlem section of New York City—they paid special tribute to two principal qualities of her career, a personal interest in each and every one of her pupils and close contact with the neighborhood in which she lived and taught. A half-century of service in one school is unique, particularly when the school lies in a "tough" neighborhood with its more than usual quantity of "problem" children. That record carries its own well merited encomium. But teaching was more than a career for Miss Smith. It was an apostolate. In her philosophy the children who sat before her were not only human beings but immortal souls on whom her visible exercise of genuine devotion and charity would leave an indelible mark, an eternal character. Not always, of course; for some of her boys went wrong. Yet most were helped and guided by her teaching, by what she was, by what she hoped they would be. The need for teachers to staff our American school system is critical and vast. And Miss Smith of PS 168 seems to us a symbol not only of the type of teacher needed but of the very deep and enduring impress such teachers—"who," in the words of Pope Pius XI, "cherish a pure and holy love for the youths confided to them"—can leave on American generations. No group of people is better fitted, and no group should have greater motivation, for making the direction and formation of youth a life apostolate than Catholic men and women who recognize in the teacher an important instrument both of our democracy and of Divine Providence.

### **ERP makes good progress**

A good cubit was added to the growth of assurance that the European Recovery Program (the Marshall plan) will be passed, and perhaps by the deadline, through the unanimous vote of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 13. On that memorable day, Senator Vandenberg guided the Committee to an authorization of \$5.3 billion for a period of twelve

months beginning April 1. This reduction from the \$6.8 billion asked by the Administration is more apparent than real, as the larger sum was postulated on a period of fifteen months. The Committee assigned weighty and sane reasons for the lesser period and smaller sum: a new Congress will have a legitimate desire to inspect the progress of the Program, and to judge whether the cooperating nations of Europe are living up to their commitments; a realistic review on the basis of actual achievements and not on mere speculation will deepen assurance of necessary appropriations in succeeding years. In addition to the sum and the period, the Senate Committee wrote many other recommendations into its version of ERP; among the most important were the administration of the Program under an independent agency of the State Department, but in close liaison with that Department and with the Commission on European Economic Cooperation, and the vesting of authority in the administrator to terminate aid to any country which is found not to comply with its commitments or with the purposes of ERP. A further development, though not included in the Committee's authorization, is the growing movement to have a joint congressional "watch-dog" committee, probably under the chairmanship of Representative Christian A. Herter of Massachusetts, to keep an eye on the entire administration of the Program. Senator Vandenberg's Committee seems to have acted wisely and with dispatch, and with a fine sense of both the realities and the ideals of the situation.

### **But can still be stymied**

All bridges aren't yet crossed, however. Funds for ERP have still to be appropriated. Both the Senate and the House must vote actually to supply the monies. Senate floor debate on ERP will open about March 1; the program may clear through the Senate by April 1, though Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire is symptomatic of the delay that threatens when he announces that he wants "much more information" on the work-sheets and details of expenditure. Outside of Congress as well, a type of thinking is still abroad which may influence Congress and retard the ultimate passage of ERP. Senator Robert A. Taft, for example, still echoes a rather smug isolationism when he proclaims that ERP must not be allowed to endanger American freedom, and then goes on to say:

We should not be actuated by a purely altruistic desire to improve the condition of a lot of other people who have failed for centuries to do the job for themselves. . . . We can't give away sums so large that they force control and government regulation and high prices and shortages which threaten the very condition here at home we are trying to protect.

And, on a more sensible plane, but still dangerous in its implications, was Governor Dewey's recent suggestion that ERP be linked explicitly with the condition that the cooperating European nations form a federation. Though Secretary of State Marshall has also expressed himself warmly in favor of a federated European West, he has

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not made that a condition of European recovery. Federation of the West must come from the West and not be imposed under conditions of economic aid from the United States. We believe the time is too pressing to complicate the passage of ERP by the inclusion of political aims which, however desirable in themselves, fall outside the actual goals of the Recovery Program. Those goals are quite simply the existence of free governments on the Continent. That those goals can be attained is shown by Barbara Ward, of the London *Economist*, writing in the *New York Times Magazine* for February 15. Though not a single ship has put in at any European port with aid under the Marshall plan, Europe, she pointed out, because of the plan, is "already a different place." It is different for many reasons, but mainly because it has been given hope. How different a place it will be when ERP really starts to work!

### **How to prevent wars**

General Eisenhower's final report as Chief of Staff, released on February 15, is a long document of ten thousand words but is a major contribution to the widespread—and anxious—public discussion now going on as to the size, form and role of our armed forces in the future. One special significance of the report is that it is based on the thesis that wars can be prevented. Our military theory is not that wars must come, or that armies are only to win wars after they have begun, but rather that they can play a constructive role in preventing war. Eisenhower takes the view that by looking back on every war it is possible to determine a point at which the chain of events that led to it could have been broken and the conflict prevented. From this circumstance, he reasons, "the inevitability of war disappears and the possibility of its prevention assumes validity." In thus aligning himself against the crude proposition of some military men that wars are inevitable, General Eisenhower increased the confidence he already enjoys among the people. But when he said that national armaments are still necessary because we have as yet developed in the international forum no practical measures to banish war, he was stating the case only incompletely. It is also true that we have not yet "developed practical measures" to counteract the evils that go with large armaments, that is to say, the rivalries they engender abroad or the ambitions they foster at home. History provides as many instances where armaments have contributed to wars as of cases in which they have prevented them. An essential part of our permanent defense policy, as it finally emerges from thorough discussion, should be clarification of the fundamental peace role of our military branch, with concrete evidence thereof. Such proposals as universal military training will continue to be opposed by educators, religious leaders and labor until such clarification is forthcoming in practical form.

### **The women can save Europe**

Writing in the *New York Times* for February 13, Anne O'Hare McCormick gives a sobering picture of lack of Western foresight on the dominant position of

women in Germany. With able-bodied German men between twenty and forty pitifully scarce, "for the next few critical years, women will be the decisive majority . . . as the women go, the country goes." In the face of this fact, which she amplifies impressively, the Western Powers and the German administration "have ignored and undervalued" the role of Germany's women. They are unorganized "and have no means to organize—no typewriters, no office space, no stationery." But the Soviets have not been so short-sighted; in their zone there are a well-organized 100,000 women in the Democratic Women's League; they have money for paper, printing and transportation; there are women Mayors and Town Councillors. The Soviet authorities, in short, "are making a tremendous play for the women." Now, this condition of the dominant power of Europe's womanhood lying latent holds, to some degree, in all European countries. In Italy, for example, where national elections will be held on April 18, there are a potential fourteen million women voters out of a total of thirty million. These women, like their sisters in Germany, are deeply anti-communist, but their hands must be strengthened by all possible means. One obvious means is being used and publicized by Common Cause, Inc.—the tremendous power of ordinary correspondence. There are millions of U. S. citizens with friends and relatives living in Italy. Regular correspondence with them, telling them that the United States is not imperialistic, is not concerned with running their countries for them, is genuinely interested in their prosperity, would do a huge amount of good in counteracting communist propaganda. Common Cause, with help from the American Legion, is working hard to increase the flow of such letters to Italy. Something like an organized movement thus to strengthen the women of Germany would convince them they are not alone, or left only to the organizing abilities of those who are their greatest foes.

### **Soviet anti-Semitism**

Can there be anti-Semitism in Russia where it is forbidden by a law almost thirty years old? An accumulation of evidence indicates that the lot of Israel is worsening in the land where a quarter of the survivors of that persecuted people live. Edward Weintal, diplomatic correspondent of *Newsweek*, reported in the issue of December 29 that officers of the Soviet Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee had called on Molotov and protested at the unpublicized but nevertheless effective anti-Jewish policy whereby Jews are to be eliminated from the armed services, from positions of influence on the masses and from any activity which would bring them into touch with foreigners. Drew Middleton, former *New York Times* Moscow correspondent, reports that anti-Semitism is "met in the streets and is evident in government departments. It flourishes in Moscow but also in Odessa and Kiev." Jews are barred from entering the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and military academies, and restricted in numbers in medical and law schools. Such a situation stimulates interest in the much-publicized autonomous Jewish republic of Birobidjan, but an observer from



there told C. L. Sulzberger, son of the publisher of the *New York Times*, that conditions are so disillusioning that the secret police prevent the pioneers from departing. Writing in *Commentary* for February, Harry Schwartz, sometime "expert on the Soviet Union for the United States Government," agrees that there is "a substantial increase in the volume and virulence of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union." Deploring the impossibility of communicating with Soviet Jews, Mr. Schwartz concludes that "it is hard to regard the problem of the Jew, either as a human being or as a Jew, as solved in a country where stringent cultural uniformity and an all-pervasive dictatorial regime leave him free to be neither."

### **Refugees still unsafe in Italy**

The long arm of the Soviet secret police is still active in Italy, despite the fact that the country has signed the peace treaty and supposedly enjoys full sovereignty. In a memorandum addressed to the Secretary of State, the Refugees Defense Committee charges that the Italian police, acting at the behest of the Soviet Embassy in Rome, arrested anti-communist refugees bound for Argentina. The memorandum urges the U. S. and British Governments to devise means for removing the remaining anti-communist refugees from Italy "to other areas where they would enjoy the effective protection of democratic authority." According to the document, the Italian police on December 30, 1947 forcibly removed fifteen refugees whose emigration had been approved by an International Refugee Organization eligibility board and who were already on the SS. *Santa Cruz* bound for South America. It is reported on excellent authority that the arrests were made on the demand of the Soviet Embassy. The arrested, whose names are known, included Russians, Ukrainians, Yugoslavs and some Poles. They have been taken to the Lipari Isles concentration camp. Family groups were broken up; fathers were carried away by the police, while mothers and children remained on board as the liner left the Italian port. Apparently the IRO, to which the Soviet Union and its satellites are not parties, is utterly helpless to prevent interference by Soviet agents in the refugee camps in Italy. It also is evident that the Italian Government, despite good will, simply does not have the power to resist the Russian pressure. Under such circumstances, it is expected that the U. S. and British Governments will act promptly and provide protection for anti-communist refugees. This they have pledged to do by signing the charter of the International Refugee Organization.

### **Bankers fight inflation**

Whatever momentary jitters some industrialists may have felt during the recent break in commodity prices, the American Bankers Association continued full speed ahead with its voluntary anti-inflationary program. All over the country, ABA representatives are calling "pilot meetings," exhorting bankers to assume leadership in their communities on the inflation front, warning them of the dangers of loans not destined to increase produc-

tion. These efforts are being highly publicized, and for a very good reason. Bankers do not want to be blamed this time for feeding the fires of speculation and thus contributing to a bust. As ABA President, Joseph M. Dodge, told the Mid-winter Trust Conference, held two weeks ago in Manhattan:

We cannot repeat the mistakes of former periods when banks contributed substantially to the inflation itself in the amount and nature of the credit granted, and then, when a depression followed, made the situation worse by calling loans and being unable or unwilling to extend credit. Just as we are now using our effort to modify inflation on the upside, we must be prepared to step in and modify deflation on the downside with amply reserves of available credit.

Naturally the bankers are motivated by the fear that, unless they exercise voluntary restraints on credit, the Government may step in and impose controls. But the recognition of this self-interest in no way detracts from the wisdom of the course they are pursuing or its value to the economy as a whole. For a crisp, intelligent anti-inflationary crusade, the American Bankers Association rates a pat on the back.

### **Foreign assets and the ERP**

Foreign governments, intended recipients of ERP aid, have long been requesting U. S. help in uncovering concealed dollar assets of their own nationals. They have tried every expedient to coax this hidden wealth back to assist in the reconstruction of devastated homelands, but without our cooperation they are powerless to get at assets held, often through Swiss banks, in the United States. Treasury Secretary Snyder's National Advisory Council, after long study, has proposed its answer to the problem. Free dollar assets—i.e., those that have accrued since the lifting of controls in December, 1945—will not be affected. But blocked assets, not certified as free of enemy taint, will either be revealed to the foreign governments if their owner is known, or confiscated by the U. S. if no owner comes forward to identify himself. The total of such assets is estimated to be over \$1,100 million. Since the program is aimed at large accumulations, accounts under \$5,000 will go untouched. Some bankers, and of course the foreigners concerned, are loud in their denunciation of this "bad faith." By why should such people be enabled to escape their share of the costs of reconstruction while the American taxpayer is doling out billions? They, too, have moral obligations toward the common welfare of their countries. Hence, justice seems to sanction Secretary Snyder's program. But, as a further step in aiding the ERP countries to rehabilitate themselves, the proposal of Representative Sundstrom of New Jersey for a completely new issue of U. S. currency merits consideration. A vast quantity of our outstanding currency is known to be in hiding in Europe. His plan would help to bring this out in the open where it, too, could be useful in strengthening and reconstructing shaky economies. The U. S. economy would also benefit from a more accurate knowledge of our money supply and the incidental nipping of black-market profits.



## Washington Front

While it is too soon at this writing to gauge the full effect of the drop in commodity prices on the exchanges, nevertheless it is already possible to estimate the political repercussions of the event.

It does not seem likely from here that the decline was deliberately managed, even if that were possible. One of the largest winners by selling short said that all he had to do was read the newspapers to know that prices were bound to go down. It is probable that a lot of other people also read the newspapers.

But whether managed or not, the incident offers some highly informative lessons on the effect economics can have on politics these days.

If the price level for foodstuffs and clothing does really and permanently go lower, the pressure for higher wages will definitely be off management and the Administration. On the other hand, it is problematic how the commercial farmers will take their relatively lower income, and what effect the attitude they adopt will have on the farm workers' wages. It might easily be that the country will only have exchanged industrial unrest for agrarian dissatisfaction.

The Republicans as a party will also be faced with a dilemma: whether to keep on blaming the President for

high prices, or condemn him for the slump. The attitude which that party takes may well bring out an always latent opposition between its city constituents and its following among the farmers. In any case, the position of the Administration for price control will be definitely weakened, and its opponents' strengthened.

One of the most important results may be in the final handling of the European Recovery Program. There are already signs that its opponents will come out now and say that since the original estimates were based on high and rising prices, they can easily be lowered, and the total appropriation diminished. It will be hard for the Administration to counter this argument, but it may be that Governor Dewey has already come to its rescue when he said that the Administrator of the Program should be given a wide margin in the total amount handed him to meet possible contingencies.

There are also some bright sides to the prospect. There can be no doubt that one of the causes of the break was the abnormally mild winter which Western Europe experienced this year, and the correspondingly hopeful expectations of a bumper crop, especially of wheat. This would naturally result in Europe's needs in foodstuffs to be had from us being substantially lowered in volume and this, too, would be a moderating influence on the course of prices over here. The Administration would also be relieved of the charge that government buying is keeping prices high.

WILFRID PARSONS

## Underscorings

Catholic meetings in March: 2-4, regional meeting of the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems, Boston; 8-10, the 16th annual convention of the National Catholic Family Life Conference, Hartford, Conn.; 30-April 2, the 45th annual convention of the National Catholic Educational Association, San Francisco.

► The Most Rev. J. Francis A. McIntyre, Coadjutor Archbishop of New York since 1946, has been named Archbishop of Los Angeles as successor to Archbishop John J. Cantwell, who died last October 30; and the Most Rev. Gerald T. Bergan, Bishop of Des Moines, Iowa, since 1934, is successor to the late Archbishop James H. Ryan of Omaha, who died Nov. 23, 1947.

► A significant adult-education radio program, sponsored in Boston by the Lowell Institute Cooperative Broadcasting Council, recently completed its first year of service by presenting a radio symposium on the value of radio as a medium of adult education. Participating in the symposium were the presidents of Boston College, Boston University, Harvard, M.I.T., Tufts and Northeastern. Beginning on February 3, 1947, the Council presented in its first year 412 programs, representing 115 hours of education. Most of the broadcasts consisted

of special radio adaptations of regular college and university courses. The significance of the venture is that it brings the facilities of all the higher institutions in a metropolitan area to serve the community as a whole, and that it may have a very good effect on both adult education and radio planning.

► The Aristotelian Society of Marquette University will have Rev. William R. O'Connor of St. Joseph's Seminary, New York, as its Aquinas lecturer on March 7. His topic will be "The Natural Desire for God."

► Talks given at the fifth annual Week of Catholic Action Study for Priests, which was held at the University of Notre Dame, August 4-8, 1947, have been issued by Fides Publishers (325 Lincoln Way West, South Bend 5, Ind.) under title of *The Lay Apostolate and the Priest*. The volume sells at a dollar. . . . And two other publications coming from university centers: *The Heresy of Courty Love*, by Alexander J. Denomy, C.S.B., of the Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, which inaugurated Boston College's Candlemas Lectures on Christian Culture (Declan X. McMullen, \$1.50) and *Cistercian Settlements in Wales and Monmouthshire, 1140-1540*, by Jeremiah F. O'Sullivan, Ph.D., which is second in the History Series of Fordham University Studies (McMullen, 137p. \$2). . . . Add an excellent pamphlet by William A. Fitzgerald, Ph.D., *The Family Book Shelf*, a graded and annotated list for family reading (Confraternity Publications, Paterson 3, N. J.). A. P. F.

# Editorials

## *Whither now?*

Despite the break in the commodity markets, President Truman has reiterated his belief in the necessity of anti-inflation controls. He still holds that Congress ought to adopt the ten-point program which he first proposed last November.

To a country alternating between joy over the prospect of lower prices and fear of a depression, the President's statement should be an indication that, in the opinion of his economic advisers, what has so far happened in the grain markets is a spectacular readjustment and not the beginning of a bust. This is not, in other words, the disaster which Mr. Truman predicted if the Congress failed to adopt adequate measures to control inflation; although farmers who were caught holding grain, either in anticipation of still higher prices or to avoid heavy taxes on 1947 income, may be pardoned for having a different opinion. To them the drop in grain prices, which meant a \$3 billion loss, at least on paper, was a real disaster, and no fooling.

If this, indeed, is the position of the Administration—the President has deferred a definite estimate of the situation pending study and further developments—the reasons are not difficult to seek. They are the same ones which led delegates to the two-day meeting of the National Farm Institute in Des Moines, February 13-14, to believe that, although prices of wheat and corn may not return to their aery January peaks, they will soon level off and start to climb again. Those reasons are demand at home and hunger abroad.

If it is true, then, to say that there has been no basic change in the inflationary supply-demand relationship in farm products, but only a modification, it is even more true to say that the big problem in industrial prices remains inflation. With only a few minor exceptions, industrial prices were firm throughout the flurry in the commodity markets and, two weeks after the break started, there was no evidence at all that business was headed for a recession. The basic industries are still trying to catch up on orders; the European Recovery Program will maintain a level not far below that of 1947; a reduction of income taxes, if it comes, will leave consumers with more to spend; and the third round of postwar wage increases has gone too far now to be abandoned. In addition, if the prices of commodities should be stabilized at approximately present levels and be reflected in lower living costs, families which have been spending fifty per cent of their income for food will be able to re-enter the market for consumer durables. And although farmers may have something less than the \$18 billion they netted last year, they will still have enough to buy their share of refrigerators, radios and automobiles. Despite the sensational de-

cline in the prices of wheat and corn, it should not be overlooked that both commodities, as of February 16, remained above the levels of last September, which, in turn, were respectively thirty-three and eighty-eight cents above parity.

The choice, then, the country faces today is substantially no different from the choice it faced last autumn. We can permit things to drift as they are doing at present, knowing that ultimately the crash will come and that the longer the boom lasts the worst the crash will be; or we can take care now to channel the raging forces loosed by the war. President Truman's ten-point program ought to be speedily enacted, including authority to impose limited rationing and price controls. It may never be necessary to use this authority, but the fact that the Government has it will be good insurance for the uncertain days ahead.

As we have pointed out before, the world is not at peace. No one can predict what problems may confront us even before the year is out. We recognize that we must look to our defenses and are preparing to spend some \$11 billion on the Army, Navy and Air Force in fiscal 1949. Why should we be less concerned with the nation's economic well-being, which, in the long run, is more important to our security than aircraft carriers and atom bombs?

## *Last chance for China*

The time has come for the United States to decide what it will do if and when Chinese Communists—well armed and supported by Soviet Russia—successfully cross the Yangtze River this spring. What would be our nation's attitude toward a China dominated by Soviet quislings, trained for years within the Soviet Union? Are we prepared to deal with a Chinese government which looks to Moscow for political guidance and economic policies?

We have had bitter experiences with Soviet-dominated Poland, Soviet-ruled Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary. Should China become a satellite, how effective will our efforts be in the United Nations regarding peace treaties with Germany, Austria and Japan, or the final settlement of Korean independence and trusteeship of the Pacific islands? Could we still go ahead implementing plans for international peace and stability, if threatened by totalitarian forces not only in Europe but on the Asiatic mainland as well?

These are questions of the hour. Answers must be found. No American with the interests of his country at heart can afford to ignore any longer what happens in China. The struggle for sovereignty between the Chinese Communists and the Government of Chiang Kai-shek has ceased to be a purely internal matter. The outcome vitally affects our own security.

Opponents of all-out aid to China still argue that the Chiang Kai-shek Government is ridden with war-lords, reactionaries and the corrupt clique of a fascist-minded Kuomintang who aim at enslavement of the Chinese people. These reputedly impartial observers keep silent about the alternative choice—the Communists. Thus the impression is created that forces opposing the Nationalist Government are social reformers, heralds of a more vigorous moral order and crusaders for better government, rather than what they are—the vanguard of the most despotic system in the world, Soviet communism.

The universal planners in the Kremlin have not overlooked China. In a book published by the Chinese Communist Party in February, 1947 and entitled *Basic Knowledge for Party Members*, we read:

Among the national parties, the Communist Party of the USSR has given the greatest aid to the Chinese Revolution. . . . Of all the national parties, the Communist Party in the USSR is the most powerful and experienced. . . . It has served as their example and acted as the Big Brother of the family. Manifestly the Communist Party of the USSR is not just a party. It has the backing of the strongest totalitarian government and the biggest army on earth.

But a few months ago the United States entertained hope that the Chiang Kai-shek Government would rally and effectively finish the ravaging civil war. Today this hope has vanished. In a war of attrition, communist armies destroy crops, burn factories, cut railroad lines, with the single objective of creating chaos and hunger.

More than two months ago General Wedemeyer returned from China, where he had gone as President Truman's special envoy. In his report to the Senate Appropriations Committee, suppressed for security reasons, he stressed the urgency of military and financial aid to China. Earlier, General Marshall had himself frankly reported that Chinese Communists were genuine Marxists, bent on communistic revolution (cf. *AMERICA*, Aug. 9, 1947, p. 510). In line with this thought, Senator Styles Bridges on January 22, 1948 peremptorily demanded that a major aid program be instituted at once. At last, on February 5, the State Department recommended to the National Advisory Council a China-relief and assistance program totaling \$510 million. The program was admittedly only a temporary measure, designed to prevent the Chinese economy from becoming worse than it is today.

Yet without adequate assistance, including military aid, China cannot hold out. If she falls, we ourselves suffer a major defeat in the Orient. Asia has been aroused already by the creation of a Soviet puppet government in North Korea. The Nationalist hold on Mukden weakens daily; when that key city goes, Manchuria is dominated by Communists. The turn then comes for the cities of North China. Their conquest can have an alarming effect upon our strategic positions in Japan, South Korea and even the Philippines.

China's freedom is in peril. The pressure upon her government is such that aid must come from without if we are not to witness another Soviet victory. And China, we should not forget, is the key to the Orient.

## World trade at Havana

One thing the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment has taught us is that a world code of trade cannot be agreed upon overnight. The eighteen-nation Preparatory Committee did its work well at Geneva last year. But the protracted Geneva sessions were only the beginning. The draft charter of the International Trade Organization still had to win approval from the fifty eight nations which sent delegates to Havana in late November. The first half of February found the delegates engaged in threshing out differences, despite earlier hopes for mid-January adjournment.

Disagreements on details were to be expected. The sugar question, for example, was bound to come up between Cuba and the United States. But most delays arose not so much from technical points as from disagreements on fundamental outlook toward trade. The pre-Christmas crisis was a case in point. The sharp differences at that time over quantitative restrictions left the U.S. delegation quite downcast. Too many nations seemed bent on obstructing achievement of even basic objectives.

Fortunately, the worst phases of disagreement appear over. At least a viable world trade organization can now be expected. Compared with what the U. S.—which submitted the original proposals—hoped for, the prospective ITO would be weak, with considerable discretion on trade policy left to the individual nations. But that only emphasizes the obstacles which had to be met at Havana.

The United States has from the outset advocated moderate control by an international organization in such wise as to give maximum play to private initiative. It does not want the world broken up into an economic checker board, with each sovereignty laying down conflicting rules without due regard for the world economy as a whole. That way lies trade anarchy, which serves only to stifle commerce and lessen chances for improved world living standards.

Free trade as such has not been the U. S. objective. That charge is made, of course, by some less developed countries which prefer to view the United States as a sprawling economic giant reaching out for more underdeveloped areas to exploit.

On the contrary, U. S. proposals were built upon the hypothesis that under-developed countries everywhere would learn to make better use of their resources. Then they could exchange goods with the more industrialized nations on a fairly equal footing. Multilateral trading, with a minimum of hampering restrictions, could make possible a world balance of trade without those exclusive bilateral deals whereby nations strive for balance between imports and exports. Presumably even the under-developed countries would be making a proportionate contribution to the world economy and would have something to export in payment for what was bought. In the freer atmosphere their chances of development would improve.

The postwar economic crisis makes difficult immediate achievement of freer trade as envisaged in the draft ITO charter. Trade controls are a powerful means employed



by weakened nations to prevent runs upon exchange until such time as production approximates domestic and export needs. Fear of economic instability has led even those favoring U. S. trade objectives in principle to insist on the need for retention of controls.

But the temporary character of the present situation must be emphasized. The more far-seeing should prepare now for a world economy in which private or non-governmental initiative has more scope. The only alternative, in the long run, is widespread state trading between isolated autarchic units. Such a state of affairs spells triumph of economic nationalism.

The disagreement at Havana is symptomatic of worldwide divergence of ideas on economic policy. By and large the United States foreign trade policy favors limitation of government intervention to what is absolutely necessary. This attitude is shared by relatively few nations in the Atlantic community. The others take more or less for granted a high degree of government control of foreign trade. They have economic reasons for their position, but the U. S. view is not without solid foundation either.

We have positive evidence of the hampering influence exerted on trade by excessive restrictions, whereas regulated freedom under supervision of the international community has never had an opportunity of proving itself. Before we invite a period of economic warfare, it were well to give ITO ideals a chance. If we do not, economic war may usher in more serious conflicts.

## Mr. Hull's memoirs

A prophet's role is seldom as gratifying as it may appear, once the events solemnly foretold actually come to pass. In reviewing the occurrences of his life, former Secretary of State Cordell Hull has felt the bitter sting of peculiarly exasperating reproaches. Those whom he most zealously warned as to the impending disasters happen to be those to whom such warnings were most distasteful at the time they were uttered. He was suspected for foretelling the inevitability of the conflict that was to come, and blamed afterwards for not having uttered the warning. As he remarks (*New York Times*, Feb. 3, 1948):

The mounting threats to peace in Europe and Asia had in America exactly the opposite effect they should have had. They ought to have made a large section of the American public more willing to unite with right-minded nations abroad in bringing pressure to bear on the nations obviously preparing for war. Instead, they caused those Americans, most of whom were honest in their beliefs, to pull back in alarm and to vow they would have nothing to do with the rest of the world. They blindly failed to see that a major war anywhere could not but touch us in many vital points.

Mr. Hull's reaction to that tendency, at the time, was to "never cease trying to point out" to his countrymen, and to foreign governments as well, "that the danger to peace was great and becoming greater." Even to this day, he notes, persons "with apparent surprise and astounding ignorance or forgetfulness, say loudly to us in immediate charge of foreign relations in those days: 'What were you

doing during the years following 1933? Why did you not discern the foreign dangers steadily developing?'"

The phenomenon Mr. Hull knew is still with us, though in considerably lessened degree. Today, after a decade and a half and another World War, the scales of isolationism have dropped from eyes that were desperately blinded to the Secretary's anxious admonitions.

But another element in the Cordell Hull experience is most timely to recall; for it concerns the innate weakness of democracies in dealing with the dangers of a rising totalitarianism. "Immediately upon entering the State Department," writes Mr. Hull, "I saw that only a common attitude among the major Western democracies, the United States, Great Britain and France," could recall the "three jingoist countries"—Germany, Italy and Japan—to their senses. "Actually we presented a miserable spectacle of disagreement and recrimination more often than of accord."

Troubles between France and Britain had started at the Paris Peace Conference. It was the old dispute between the French fear of a strong Germany and the British desire of a European balance of power; and neither government was ready to face the test of war.

Here we were face to face with a basic weakness of democracies, or of governments in which the people have an important voice. . . . With due respect for the varying and conflicting opinions of individuals and groups here and in the other peace-loving countries during the nineteen-thirties, I am sure that if the nations standing for peace had taken concerted action to arm adequately, they could have demanded a showdown with the bandit nations . . . and averted the recent World War.

One of the most important items for Mr. Hull to set straight in the record—in view of present controversies—was the matter of Myron Taylor's mission to the Vatican. From his memoirs we learn that it was not with the President, but with the State Department, that the plan originated. As Mr. Hull writes:

Early in July 1939, nearly two months before the outbreak of the war, Under-Secretary of State Welles and I had discussed the advantage that might be gained through such relations. We felt that the Vatican had many sources of information, particularly with regard to what was occurring in Germany, Italy and Spain, which we did not possess. At my suggestion, Welles wrote a personal letter to Ambassador Phillips in Rome, seeking his opinion. Phillips replied on July 19, recommending diplomatic relations and suggesting that a Protestant be sent as the American representative. Welles sent this letter to the President.

Mr. Hull pays high tribute to Mr. Taylor's intelligence and "unusual common sense," and his work in initiating and developing the outlines of a proposed peace organization.

Mr. Hull has been criticized for not doing what he did do; or what was wisely and patriotically done—like the suggestion of the Vatican representation—has been misconstrued and condemned. Seeing that today we are facing new threats and decisions as grave as in 1939, we can do worse than to recall the experiences that he so interestingly describes.

## Freedom's eastern frontier

**Philip Bourret**

*Father Philip Bourret, S.J., has just returned from China, where he spent three months in making an educational survey with respect to the possibility of establishing a Jesuit college of engineering in Nanking. Father Bourret is a member of the California Province.*

Two things are certain today about China. Six months or a year ago we might have guessed that the Nationalists would lose the civil war. Today we know for a fact that they are losing it. They are losing so fast that it is difficult to see how they can keep the communist forces from controlling the whole of north and central China beyond the end of this year. And when that time comes the end is in sight. This is fact number one.

Fact number two is what makes the evidence of China's defeat by communist forces so important to Americans. Simply stated, it comes to this: when the Communists control China, Russia will control China.

About this last point there has been in the past considerable confusion. It has been said that the Chinese Communists are essentially reformers, seeking to end inequalities in land tenure and corruption in the National Government; it is pointed out that the people of China are not naturally communist, that they will not seek or even accept a full-blown Marxian-communist government. And so it has been argued that the present Red revolt is more of a reform movement than an attempt to make China another Soviet state. Along with this have been endless allegations of the corruption and the fascist nature of the Central Government. No wonder Americans have wondered what to believe; and usually end up happy that we have stayed out of so confusing a business.

Sadly enough, the average American is still confused. He is right, of course, in believing that the problem in China is complex. But with all its complexity there is one fact about Chinese communism which stands out clearly and about which people need no longer doubt. It is this: Russia's influence over the Red forces in China is all that she could wish for. And there is every reason to believe that as the Red forces in China make further progress, Russia will succeed in controlling the policy and using the country and resources of China exactly as she pleases.

Characteristic of communist success in the countries of Eastern Europe has been the guidance and control of the Party by a small number of carefully trained leaders. In China, biographical information from Soviet Russian sources indicates that nearly half of the top Chinese communist leaders have spent periods of from five or six months to as much as fifteen years in Soviet Russia. The most important military and political leader, Mao Tze-tung, though never in Russia, is exceptionally well versed in the kind of communism we have come to know from the Soviets. In a Christmas message to his followers, Mao leaves no room for doubt that his program for the coming year is inspired by the doctrines of Karl Marx.

Further evidence of the party-line nature of China's communism can be found in the reports now coming out, covering two years of religious persecution in Red areas. So characteristic of the real China has been religious tolerance and acceptance of the work of the missionaries from abroad that considerable publicity has been given to Red protestations of religious freedom in communist China. The following statistics, which cover twenty dioceses, were carefully prepared by American priests in North China. They tell a different story. During two years forty-nine priests or brothers were murdered, of whom nearly half were tortured. One hundred and sixty-six churches were looted, 123 converted into movie theatres, 25 nearly destroyed, 183 used for communist headquarters and other profane purposes. Reds have occupied 216 mission stations, looted 245 and destroyed 88. More than five hundred priests are now living in Peiping, driven from their missions by the Communists.

Of seventeen Trappists who died as a result of mistreatment after their monastery was burned to the ground, most were Chinese, indicating that the attack is not one exclusively against foreigners. It must be noted, however, that the accusations are usually carefully phrased so as to give the impression that no attempt is being made directly to interfere with the practice of religion. Yet many instances are on record of direct statements by Communists of their intention ultimately to do away completely with Christianity.

For fear of reprisals against Christians and priests still in communist territory, little publicity has been given to these facts during the past year. It is indicative of the seriousness of this persecution that the bishops of China admit now that treatment of Christians is so bad that there is little more that could be done in the way of retaliation.

Serious observers in China recognize clearly that these and other manifestations of true Russian communism make it plain beyond doubt that the leaders of China's Red Army acknowledge Russia as their political teacher. If China is to be the first exception to the continuing pattern of communist domination in countries outside Russia, there is very little evidence to prove this.

It will be difficult for many readers to believe that the Nationalists in China are really facing certain and rapid defeat at the hands of the Reds. When I was first told this by an American engineer working with the Central Government in Nanking, several months ago, I was not ready to believe it. But as more and more people, long in China and in a position to gather accurate information, made the same prediction, I began to wonder if they might not be correct.

There are reasons for their predictions. Communist advances have not all been on the military front. More

decisive have been their advances in the war of attrition. By cutting the railroads and seizing crops at harvest time, by destroying factories and interfering in every possible way with the conduct of trade and industrial activity in Nationalist-controlled China, the Communists have succeeded in radically weakening the Government's economy. In Government-controlled areas and in the big cities are the majority of China's people. To provide food for these, to try to support industry and trade with sources of raw materials cut off, with important coal supplies no more accessible, has been an almost impossible task. And all this comes upon a country already exhausted by ten years of war with Japan.

Enough is known about corruption among members of the Army and minor officials in the Government to complete the picture of a China too sick and weakened to be able to hold out much longer.

We have been better informed of the work done in Japan by the American Army under the direction of General MacArthur than we have been of affairs in China. Yet do we realize the effect on Japan of a Russian-controlled China? Japan can be self-supporting only by importing huge quantities of food and enough raw materials to process so that the finished product may be used to balance the cost of the food imports. China must play the major part in this kind of trade; and China herself would in turn profit by it. Under Russian control there is every reason to doubt that such a trade agreement will be permitted with Japan. The effect will be immediate and continuing; so that our hope of a self-supporting Japan will not be realized.

With the mainland of China controlled by Russia, the strategic importance of Japan, the Philippines and other Pacific island frontiers would be vastly increased. But their military security would be reduced to a point where their value for us as buffer territory would be extremely doubtful. This is clear from the unhappy history of the first years of our war with Japan.

What of the military situation in China? No one expects Manchuria to hold out more than a month or two longer. With the fall of Mukden, Manchuria will be gone. And over two months ago there were already food riots in this city, which has been under continual siege.

After Manchuria, it will be a difficult task to hold the two great cities of Peiping and Tientsin. Except for these two cities and the narrow corridor which joins them and runs up to the west through Kalgan, there is little left in the north of China which the Reds do not already hold.

To the south, China's rich central Yangtze valley is already threatened by communist forces not far from Hankow. Attempts to cut the Yangtze River could be successfully carried out, and a flank movement down towards the capital at Nanking would quickly follow. Considerable thought has been given to the possible last-stand transfer of the capital to Canton.

We may wonder what the United States is doing in the face of these dangers to China. We may think, as I did, that careful plans are quietly being carried forward to give needed assistance to the Central Government. There

is a United States military advisory group in Nanking. And at Tsingtao our Navy is assisting in the training of Chinese naval units. But these aids do not begin to solve the major military and economic problems which must find solution if China is to be saved from communism.

That our State Department recognizes the problem there can be no question. But even with the aid program of over half a billion dollars which it has prepared for congressional approval, the assistance is still looked on by the State Department as a mere "holding operation."

What can the United States do to prevent this imminent domination of the mainland of Eastern Asia by communism? We are accepting the expenditure of approximately \$5 billion in Europe as a measure necessary to curb the advance of communism there. Will we at the same time watch it take roots throughout China without letting Congress even know the extent of the means needed to prevent it?

The State Department is in possession of a document, the Wedemeyer Report, which evidently gives us the answer to this question. It is the answer of a man who has spent ten years in China, who is a military man of recognized ability and who has taken the time needed to make a thorough report. The following statement was publicly made at a congressional



hearing by General Wedemeyer: "Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek is the logical leader in China today and the only man in China with whom we can do business. He needs our help and he should get our help."

This statement of General Wedemeyer raises a question of which Americans have heard much during the past year—the corruption and inefficiency of the Nationalist Government, together with its iron control over the people. We naturally wonder whether or not we should help a government which has been accused of being far from democratic and disinterested in its administration.

Here we can easily continue the mistake which has evidently been made during the past two years. We can focus our attention on the truth that is present in these accusations. It is not hard to see that Russia's strategy is well served if, while we criticize the regime of Chiang Kai-shek, the Communists quietly ensure their total victory in China.

It is charged that the Government is not democratic. In speaking of this we must not forget that every government at war has to tend, practically and for the time being, away from rather than toward democratic processes. The present Government of China, during the years 1927-1937, before the Japanese invasion and all-out civil war, built up a really creditable record in progress toward democratic reform. During November, 1947, popular elections were held, and in December a constitution was adopted which in its wording is certainly democratic. No one claims that these are more than signs of a tendency toward democracy. China, after all, is more than eighty per cent illiterate, and even her



critics find it hard to explain how a democracy such as we have could exist among a people who neither read nor write.

While engaged in a war that threatens her very survival, when communist elements are active within her very cities, China must step cautiously in extending civil liberties. Yet plenty of criticism is permitted in the newspapers. Correspondents who deny this either cannot or do not read the Chinese newspapers. In Red territory no such freedom of the press is even thought of. Newspapers are few, and they slavishly tell only what the Party lets them tell.

If the Government were making no progress toward democratic reform but were merely holding the line against the stifling of human liberties which goes on constantly in the Red zones, it would be making a precious contribution to the general cause of freedom for man.

No one these days attempts a denial of the corruption which exists in the Government of Chiang Kai-shek. But again we play into the hands of Russia if, while we talk of China's corruption, we allow communism to march through the land. The Chinese do not approve of corruption; they deplore it and are ashamed of its prevalence in their midst. They do not excuse it; but they perhaps understand it better than many righteous foreigners seem to. Army salaries and those of government officials are absurdly inadequate; so the difference between salary and the cost of even frugal living has to be made up by extra-legal means. To raise salaries by printing-press money aggravates inflation and economic demoralization; to do it by increasing taxation stirs resentment among the people heavily burdened. "You're emptying the lake to catch the fish," they already say. The Chinese sage, Kuantze, says: "First let provisions suffice, then distinguish between honor and dishonor."

With eighty per cent of the national budget spent on the civil war, little is left for the efficient conduct of city and local government. The people feel the weight of the poverty and oppression which result. Yet those who have experienced the alternative of communism do not find their lot a happier one. In Red areas we find that poverty is likewise the rule, though sometimes it is distributed with greater equality. Brick houses are leveled, lest they irritate the poor dwellers of mud-walled huts. No one dares to own a mule, although it be needed to plow the parched soil, because mule-owners fall into the perilous category of the "wealthy." When Communists move into an area, families eat up their pigs and poultry as soon as they can, in order to anticipate confiscation.

In the communist program of agrarian reform, each person's quota of land must not exceed three *mou*, or half an acre. A family with fifty *mou* is listed as first-class capitalist, to be punished with death or destitution. A thirty-*mou* family is called second-class capitalist, and sees its ancestral plot divided among people who sometimes do not want to do farming, and know nothing about tilling the soil. And this is in wheat country. It is not efficient to garden wheat. Draft animals, tools, fertilizers require more revenue than a tiny subsistence plot

produces. Red Army and Party taxes slice off a large part of the yield from the tiny plots—fifty or sixty per cent is not unusual. The Chinese "landlord problem" was acute in only a few provinces, for historical and geographical reasons. But the Communists use it as a propaganda instrument to promote their total domination of the people in all the provinces. "In the days before the Reds came," an old Chinese told a friend of mine, "some of us used to have something, and others had more. Now none of us has anything."

These facts are brought out, not as a denial of corruption and abuses in the ranks of the Government in China, but rather to show that the communist elements do not necessarily bring peace or prosperity—much less freedom or democracy—to the millions of China's peasants.

Many in America have suggested that our help to China be conditioned on Chiang Kai-shek's first cleaning out the most notoriously corrupt among the officials of his Government. It might be possible for the Generalissimo to do this if he were sure that he could replace the support which his Government would thereby lose by assured help from the United States. Actually there is little in the history of our attitude toward China these last few years to assure him we would keep our part of the bargain. Last December 17, before a congressional committee, General Wedemeyer said he did not think that in his judgment we had kept our promises to China over the years. It might well be better statesmanship on our part to make our help to China and China's cleaning-up of corruption in her Government a mutual proposition, both advancing together.

The history of our State Department's handling of the China question leaves much to be desired. It is not clear that Congress should blindly leave to it the decision as to how help should be given China, without itself having an opportunity to see the Wedemeyer Report. Yet this is precisely what is being done. In his message to Congress last week, President Truman asked this body to accept the State Department recommendation that no military assistance be given China. We should not allow ourselves to be deceived by the \$570 million aid program. The State Department knows and admits that this will not be sufficient to push back communist advances. Characteristic has been the stolid refusal of Marshall and his Department assistants to admit the impending communist danger. Nowhere is this clearer than in the present proposal of inadequate aid. Senators Bridges, Vandenberg and others have shown themselves willing to use ability and influence in Congress to demand a wise and vigorous policy.

From the Wedemeyer Report they will know what military aid to China is needed. They could hardly do better than request that Wedemeyer himself be sent to China to work with the Generalissimo. It would be a tragedy of our democratic system if, for fear of lagging support at home during an election year, Congress failed to demand for China all the help called for by the impending danger of a Russian-controlled continent of East Asia.

# The press goes to London

**Helen Walker Homan**

*Helen Walker Homan, wartime representative of the National Catholic Community Service on the USO publicity staff, attended the Foreign Ministers' Conference in London as a representative of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the Sign magazine.*

It was cold, very bleak and dark in London on the evening of December 15, 1947—especially in Carlton Gardens, where sits the French Embassy, a stone's throw from Pall Mall. Ernest Bevin's dignified house, almost next door, presented a calm exterior. Yet its owner, one of the "Big Four" and at that moment over in Lancaster House at a session of the Foreign Ministers' Council, unlike his house was probably presenting a façade that was far from calm. For the sessions of the Council, assembled to frame the peace treaties for Germany and Austria, had now dragged on for three weeks, with Mr. Molotov's negatives steadily growing longer, and Mr. Bevin's patience shorter and shorter. Reporters were not admitted to the sessions.

But, within a half hour or so, the press conferences which immediately followed them would start—one at the American Embassy and one at the French, with the British convening in the old Carlton Hotel; and the Russians in great privacy, if not behind an iron curtain, behind some very effective blackout curtains shrouding an old mansion away over in Kensington Palace Gardens. In three of the conferences, the press would be given a factual account of the deliberations at that day's meeting. In the fourth, only a small and select portion of it would be given just what was considered good for it to know—so much and no more.

"How," I had asked the British press attaché, "can a correspondent cover all four, or even three, of the conferences at one and the same time? Unlike Saint Francis of Assisi, I don't possess the gift of bilocation."

That had been the headache of all correspondents since the Council's last meeting in Moscow, he explained; but some newspapers and wire services had enough representatives in London to ensure individual coverage of each. The rest of us would just have to hop, skip and jump about.

It had been a matter of fascination over the weeks to study these gatherings, each unconsciously colored by the characteristics of the nations it represented. The American conference was practical, terse, and would have been objective to the point of frigidity except for an obviously conscientious effort to give the news fairly, and to give it all. The State Department had sent its brilliant young Charles E. Bohlen, expert on Russia, to conduct these meetings in Grosvenor Square, and also the dynamic Michael J. McDermott (Special Assistant for Press Relations), wise in experience and always the reporter's friend. When the objectivity began to grow a bit frigid, his cheerful smile had helped many of us to the realization that, after all, international relations had their human side—that even the Big Four who held the fate of Europe in their grasp were only mere men and not strange intellectual machines fashioned to a certain

pattern by their various governments to grind out acceptable individual formulas for a European peace.

For behind the governments and their Foreign Ministers were their people—humanity itself, the lowly and the poor—who everywhere wanted peace, peace for self and neighbor. If in the tussle some of their humanity could win through, could triumph over the cold machines of fear and greed, we might yet gain a unified Germany and an enduring peace.

The British conferences, held under the auspices of the Foreign Office and attended by the largest number of journalists from almost every country under the sun, were less businesslike and objective. That good-natured quality, which is at once the charm and perhaps at times also the handicap of the English, colored these cheerful meetings. To forestall any possible grimness, the British had set up a bar at the entrance to the press room in the Carlton. You had to enter through it and depart through it. How could any correspondent be grim under such circumstances? There were no bars at the American and French meetings—and on the one occasion I had "crashed" a Russian conference through the offices of a good friend who shall be nameless, I had left in such a hurry to avoid the MVD (having registered as an American representing the Catholic press) that I had no time to notice.

Upon that occasion a very suave young Russian had delivered in English to a handful of reporters the blandest account of the Foreign Ministers' deliberations I had yet heard. It seemed that everything between the Big Four at their afternoon session had been roses and honey, because three had at last acknowledged that Mr. Molotov was right. Under Mr. Molotov's gifted leadership, the Council sessions were proceeding smoothly to a successful outcome. . . . A few hours later the radio and newspapers, reporting on the same session, had given a picture which was quite the reverse.

Entertaining as had been this experience, it was the French press conferences which afforded the best amusement. There the Gallic spirit was transcendent. I doubt if any correspondent, however coldly cynical, could have remained totally unaffected by the humorous charm of M. Offroy, head of the Quai d'Orsay's news division, who sat at the end of the long table and who reported the day's deliberations in precise French. He was objective, with a Frenchman's understanding of that term—that is, with gestures. One shrug of his expressive shoulder, which was exercised as naturally as breathing, revealed more than was given in fifteen minutes of the spoken word at other conferences.

Adding spice to M. Offroy's delightful presentation were the Parisian reporters who attended, and in whom the Gallic spirit was no less evident. They leaned forward

eagerly, ran their pencils through their hair (sometimes almost tore same) and in the case of representatives of the communist papers, *l'Humanité* and *Ce Soir*, even shook their fingers as they flung rapid questions in M. Offroy's smiling face. Never shall I forget one evening when they interrupted his discourse:

"But after Mr. Molotov said that, wasn't there any discussion? What did the other Ministers say?"

M. Offroy, who had skipped on to another point, rapidly flipped over his notes.

"It was of no moment," he replied.

"But they must have said *something*," they pressed.

M. Offroy offered his inimitable shrug. He shook his head from side to side; then in some exasperation, replied:

"They said *blah-blah, blah-blah, blah-blah, blah-blah!*"

There was a "*blah-blah*" for each Foreign Minister—he was being equitable about the thing. And suddenly all in the room, even the Communists, were completely satisfied. It was a clear, brief and comprehensive account of deliberations which had occupied an hour of the Ministers' time.

Once, when the Paris communist papers had published certain articles, M. Offroy concluded his press conference with something which sounded for all the world like a French football score. He said:

"In some papers I have seen what some of you have written—that France is obstructing progress with as many negative votes as Russia. Therefore, I have prepared a *petit tableau* of the week's proposals and the votes, for and against. In summary: On articles twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three and twenty-four, the vote ran: *France, les Etats-Unis, Britannique: Oui!; Les Soviétiques: Non!*"

He rapped out the "*non*" like a pistol shot, and continued down the line of the other proposals, giving much the same ratio. Then, with a superb gesture, he struck the grand total of negative votes:

"*Les 'nons' Américains: 1; les 'nons' Britanniques: 1; les 'nons' Français: 3; les 'nons' Soviétiques: 8!*"

Immediately the room was in an uproar. The communist reporters were on their feet, gesticulating wildly, shouting objections to this "score." It was just like a ball game with everybody wanting to kill the umpire. But Umpire Offroy only smiled and spread out his hands. "It's the record," he said simply. Sulkily, *l'Humanité* and *Ce Soir* subsided in their chairs. Older and more renowned French journalists eyed them amusedly. There was "Pertinax," with his fine head, a strongly intellectual face and shock of thick white hair. There was the famous Mme. Tabouis, who sat quietly, an unobtrusive but observant listener. I had maneuvered a chair next to Anne O'Hare McCormick ("greater than all these," I was saying to myself). It was she who had pointed out Pertinax to my fascinated eyes.

Well, all this had preceded that cold evening of December 15 when I mounted the steps of the French Embassy in Carlton Gardens. I was there to pick up approval of the draft of an exclusive interview with Bidault, obtained the day before. I had not been certain I had com-

pletely understood his beautiful French, that of a poet, replete with images; and M. Weymuller, the Embassy's press attaché, who had been present at the interview, had kindly offered to look it over. I was hoping to file it at the cable office before the evening's press conference.

When I reached M. Weymuller's office, only one other reporter was there, obviously an American, but one I did not know. We nodded to each other as I took a chair. Neither M. Weymuller nor his capable secretary, Miss McDonald, was present.



There was a lot to think about, as I waited; not alone the Bidault interview. There was the personal matter of possibly leaving for home the next day. Rumors had it that the Foreign Ministers' Council might drag on for weeks. It wasn't sporting, not to see it through. Had I made a mistake in getting a reservation on the *America*, sailing December 16, from Southampton? That she would get me home in time for Christmas wasn't a valid reason in a good journalist's vocabulary. You wouldn't catch Pertinax doing that. Would the Council's real "fireworks" begin in London just as we were putting out to sea? Would I be sorry to have left? I would have to start for Southampton at seven the next morning; but upon arrival I *could* telephone London. If there had been any developments, perhaps I could cancel the passage, turn around and go back. Such doubts had deferred my packing. That would have to be done later tonight, following the press conference. There wouldn't be much sleep! And since this might be the last night in London (unless I changed my mind!) it would be best to attend the American conference in Grosvenor Square, rather than remain where I was. . . . That I might find a taxi with the wings of Mercury! It was growing late.

I glanced across the room at my companion. I supposed he was waiting for the French conference to start. Then Miss McDonald came in, and politely introduced us. She said: "This is Mr. ——— of the AP." Automatically, I stood up. He said, courteously: "Don't rise." I said: "I always rise in the presence of the AP." Then I sat down again. We each resumed our ruminations. It was very quiet in the room. Then somehow I began to sense a sort of "lull-before-the-storm"—the quiet was of a peculiar quality.

The AP man was seated at some distance from the telephone. Five still minutes passed. Then the door burst open. M. Weymuller stood on the threshold. "It is finished," he cried. "The Council is adjourned indefinitely; no agreement reached!"

I shall never forget the AP. Out of his chair in a trice, he made across the room for the telephone with the swiftness and actually the movement of a panther swooping on his prey—while I just sat with my mouth open. While he called his chief, I thought helplessly that here we were—me and the world—just where we started, away back on November 24. No peace treaty for Aus-



tria; no unified Germany; and the specter of another war looming just around the corner.

I was shaken out of my stupefaction by M. Weymuller gallantly waving the approved Bidault interview under my nose. He did it with a flourish. After all, the sessions had been such a strain on him and his staff—all of us had been going a pace—that there was a certain relief that it was over. Suddenly the thought came: “I can sail tomorrow with a clear conscience! I’ll be home for Christmas! Home, after seven months in England (I had been there since June). Home, where there’s central heating and no rationing; where the butter-and-egg man really delivers!” And I dashed for the cable office.

When I reached the American Embassy where Mr. Bohlen was concluding his report of the break-up of the Council, all objectivity had vanished. Everyone was talking at once. . . . Mr. Marshall had been superb! It was the only way. He and Mr. Bevin, M. Bidault too, had done their utmost

## On morals and inflation

Benjamin L. Masse

Recently one of Uncle Sam’s faithful and underpaid postmen delivered a letter at our office which created something of an editorial problem. The writer was a Catholic businessman, regional sales director for a large company, and the father of eight children. He had been confused from time to time by AMERICA’s position on controversial economic questions, experiencing difficulty in reconciling its stand with what he “thought to be the Church’s real position.” Finally he had been driven to the point where he felt obliged to take issue with us. What led him to do this was our advocacy of limited price controls and rationing as a partial and temporary answer to the inflationary crisis. He thought this policy was both unrealistic and communistic. He wrote:

I ask, have all of the people recently been converted to good citizenship? Is there any reason to believe that human frailty, which has been the problem of the Church for 2,000 years, no longer exists?

If I understand totalitarianism, one of its tenets is control of the total being, and yet you seem to offer controls as a means of correcting our present dilemma—an adaptation that should cause Lenin to turn over in his grave.

Having thus demolished our position, the writer went on to propose his own “realistic solution,” which he managed to pack into a single word: “work.” Why he believed this to be the true and, by implication, the Christian solution to inflation, he described in the following paragraph:

It has always seemed to me that the most basic and elementary economic law was that of supply and demand, and that an excessive demand will, with a given volume of purchasing power, always increase prices. Therefore, the combination of increased

“How soon can I get out of this town?” . . . “Hey, Jim, have you a ‘plane reservation?” . . . “Not a chance, until next week!” . . . “No cancellations” . . . “Wish I could leave tonight! . . . ”

Mr. John D. Tomlinson, the Embassy’s kind and helpful press attaché, came up to me. “I suppose you’ll have a hard time getting home, with all this crowd clamoring for reservations,” he remarked sympathetically.

I explained that I had a reservation on the *America*, due to sail in a few hours. He opened his eyes.

“Do you read the tea-leaves, or something?” he asked. I went up to Anne O’Hare McCormick, and told her.

“The next time you go psychic and get one of these revelations, I wish you’d let me know,” she said.

Then I went home and packed, and shivered, until 3 A.M. At seven, I stole out of a ghostly London, dark and still cold. A few hours later I was at sea. But I thanked Heaven (and also the *Sign* and NCWC) for having given me the time of my life.

*In view of the honest differences of opinion on the tremendous issues of American domestic and foreign policy, an Editor of AMERICA cites current history to explain why we believe our viewpoint on inflation-control measures is in line with the general welfare.*

work, plus the free use of technological developments, will result in an increase of supply and a decrease in prices in a free and competitive market. Isn’t it an obligation for man to strive toward the maximum of his personal effectiveness and to make full use of his God-given talents?

“In the last analysis,” the writer concluded, “the combination of our brains, brawn and faith, intensively applied, will solve our problems.” And he would be “very much interested in a reply.”

There were two reasons why this letter could not be printed in the correspondence column: 1) it was too long; 2) it demanded a reply which, by the nature of the objections raised, would require more space than the letter itself. (And then, too, some of our readers are annoyed by editorial replies!) Finally, the Editor-in-Chief decided that the letter was worth an article and wrote to the correspondent asking permission to use it as a springboard for an essay on how editors get the way they are. He suspected that other Catholic businessmen among our readers shared the honest confusion of our correspondent and might welcome an explanation of our policy on inflation. He thought it a good opportunity to close the deplorable gap which has come to exist between many Catholic employers and those of the clergy who strive to inculcate the social teaching of the Church. And that, dear reader, is how this article came to be written.

For our present purpose the story begins in the fall of 1945 when business leaders and farm spokesmen started a serious drive to get rid of wartime controls. For several reasons which seemed good to the Editors—the chief one being that supply and demand were hopelessly out of

line and, for critical items like food, steel and housing, would remain so for two or three years—AMERICA opposed this drive. There was a good chance that, if it were successful, the nation would run the risk of repeating the disastrous experience of the first world war, when a reckless postwar boom ended in a shattering bust. The state of the world being what it was, we did not believe that the country could afford this time to take any risks. Far better to be late in returning to normalcy than to be beforehand.

As the 1946 elections showed, this position was not popular. Beginning with the great sitdown strike of the cattle interests in June, 1946, all effective controls, except those on rents, became impossible. The fighting war was not over much more than a year when the country returned to a free market. Looking back over the past year and a half, seeing what has happened to prices during that time, we feel no regret for having upheld an unpopular cause. We still think that the nation made a bad mistake in jettisoning OPA before something approaching a normal relationship between supply and demand had been established in the marketplace.

Was there a moral principle involved in this editorial policy?

There was, or so it seemed to us. The virtue of justice, both distributive and legal, was involved.

With the ending of OPA, it was certain that prices would rise, especially prices of necessities, and that millions of our citizens would suffer economic hardship. Under the circumstances then existing, the lifting of controls was bound to be equivalent to establishing an inequitable system of rationing based not on human needs but solely on ability to pay. This meant that the 34 per cent of our families with incomes over \$3,000 a year (1946 figures) would be able to buy a disproportionate share of a limited supply of meat and dairy products, shoes and clothes, whereas the 66 per cent of our families with incomes of less than \$3,000 would largely have to do without. If justice was to be served, the Government would be obliged to continue controls until such time as supply approximated demand and gave reasonable promise that fair prices would result from a free marketplace.

In his plea to the Congress in January, 1946 to continue price controls, President Truman, it seemed to us, stood on solid moral ground. Conversely, we thought that the 80th Congress, which, like its undistinguished predecessor, was something less than enthusiastic about price control and rationing, failed in its obligation to provide for the general welfare. It procrastinated all during the spring of 1946, then, at the last minute, passed a measure so inadequate that the President felt obliged to veto it, and finally, when the damage had been done, enacted a law that was still far from satisfactory.

For the same reason that we expressed our disapproval of Congress, we criticized those business and farm groups which, with a promise that the free market would quickly provide an abundance of goods at prices people could afford to pay, led the successful fight against OPA. It seemed to us that these groups, by subordinating the general welfare to private economic interest, were failing

in social justice. We were not much impressed by the argument that in this case the enlightened self-interest of these pressure groups was identical with the common good.

President Truman had another motive in asking Congress to continue price controls—the uncertainty of the world situation. Though the last shot in the war had been fired in August, 1945 in the Pacific, it was already clear a few months later that winning the peace would be as difficult a task as winning the war had been. If it was necessary for the protection of lower-income groups at home to avoid an inflationary rise in prices and the bust that would inevitably follow, it was scarcely less necessary for the establishing of peace. A healthy American economy was seen to be an essential part of our efforts to stabilize the world political situation and promote international recovery. This alone was ample justification for a temporary extension of wartime controls, as was seen a few months later when a sharp rise in the domestic price level upset the calculations upon which the British loan had been based. (Incidentally, no one has yet figured out how much more the foreign-aid program has cost the American people than would have been the case if prices had been held at approximately June, 1946 levels.)

From mid-summer, 1946 until the early fall of last year, AMERICA said practically nothing about anti-inflation controls. The American people, through the Congress, had chosen to gamble with a free market—except for rent controls, which were weakened but not abolished—and to have continued advocating controls at the time would have been more in the nature of an academic exercise than of effective journalism.

But in July last year, stimulated by prospects of a short corn crop here and reports of the worst French wheat crop in a century, the price of farm commodities advanced alarmingly. From that time until the break in the futures market during the week beginning February 1, the cost of living marched steadily higher, causing widespread suffering and raising grave doubts about the future. While this dangerous trend was occurring at home, the foreign outlook became steadily darker. By the first of October, it was clear that unless the U.S. went quickly to the assistance of Western Europe, and on a large scale, Stalin might very well be master of the Continent before the winter was out.

By this time, of course, AMERICA was fully committed to the Marshall plan. But it was obvious that a program of foreign aid on the scale that was necessary would exert added pressure on inflationary forces that had already driven food prices up fifty-nine per cent over May, 1946 levels, and the cost of living thirty-two per cent. Accordingly we supported the ten-point anti-inflation program which President Truman proposed to Congress. We were not willing to see the Marshall plan, which is bound up with our nation's security and even more with our Christian duty, sacrificed to the exigencies of domestic politics. We were afraid, to speak more plainly, that the American people would be tempted to accept Senator Taft's ultimatum that they could have the Marshall plan but only if they were willing to take

higher prices, too. That *laissez-faire* approach ignored completely the possibility of a temporary and limited re-imposition of wartime controls.

There were two arguments against reinstating limited price and rationing controls: it was said 1) that they are "police-state" methods, and 2) that they would bring about lower production, scarcities and a black market.

The first argument was scarcely worthy of serious attention. It was largely a piece of semantics, to which, unfortunately, President Truman himself gave currency. While it is true that modern dictators, as a part of a planned economy, generally impose price controls and rationing on their hapless subjects, it is likewise true that in special circumstances democratic societies adopt freely the same procedure. Some people go so far as to argue that even a planned economy, provided it is approved by the people, is compatible with democracy, and deny that a complete system of rationing and price controls, such as all nations had during the war, can be considered, in any strict sense, "police-state" methods. Whether or not this is true, it is certainly true that between imposing on a people, by dictatorial means, a thoroughgoing system of economic controls, and adopting, with the consent of a democratic legislature, certain limited and temporary controls, there exists an essential difference. To refer to the latter as "police-state" methods is about as exact as calling the City of New York socialistic because it owns the subway system. *When the general welfare dictates rationing and price controls, a government fails in a moral obligation—providing no other factor intervenes—if it does not impose them.*

One of the factors which might excuse a state from acting would be a realization that people would violate the regulations in such numbers as to nullify them. Actually, leaders of business and farm groups had assured the Congress that the resumption of controls would only intensify inflationary forces by leading to production cutbacks and black markets. Upon analysis this could only mean that our producers are so gripped by greed for profits and our consumers are so much under the influence of selfishness that they would refuse to obey the law.

This was, and remains, a strong argument, but not a conclusive one. Many of our people are opposed to controls partly because they are ignorant: they have never been taught the connection between the moral principles they profess as Christians and their activities in the marketplace. If they could be made to see that when a government, to deal with a crisis, establishes a fair price for a commodity, the observance of that price by both buyers and sellers becomes an obligation in conscience, they would be disposed to play the game honestly. Before conceding that the case was hopeless, and that the state no longer had an obligation to impose controls, Catholic editors would naturally feel bound to attempt a job of moral education. That is what AMERICA has been trying over the past six months to do.

Our correspondent says genially that this advocacy of temporary and limited price controls "should cause Lenin to turn over in his grave." It would be truer to say that

if anyone should turn over in his grave, it would be Pope Leo XIII, who, noting our correspondent's attitude toward necessary government intervention in the economic order, might begin to doubt whether *Rerum Novarum* had ever been written. It was not Marx or Lenin but Leo XIII who wrote:

Those who govern must see to it that they protect the community and its constituent parts: the community, because nature has entrusted its safeguarding to the sovereign power in the State to such an extent that the protection of the public welfare is not only the supreme law, but is the entire cause and reason for sovereignty; and the constituent parts, because philosophy and Christian faith agree that the administration of the State has from nature as its purpose, not the benefit of those to whom it has been entrusted, but the benefit of those who have been entrusted to it. . . . If, therefore, any injury has been done to or threatens either the common good or the interests of individual groups, which injury cannot in any other way be repaired or prevented, it is necessary for public authority to intervene.

Or again:

Equity therefore commands that public authority show proper concern for the worker so that from what he contributes to the common good he may receive what will enable him, housed, clothed and secure, to live his life without hardship. Whence, it follows that all those measures ought to be favored which seem in any way capable of benefiting the condition of workers.

In the passage in *Rerum Novarum* from which those excerpts have been taken there is much more of the same tenor, all of it stressing the duty of the state to intervene in the marketplace, as circumstances require, in the interest of securing distributive justice. It is one thing to say that circumstances last fall did not require economic controls, or that the controls proposed were not proper ones. There can be a difference of opinion on these matters. But it is another thing to say that an anti-inflation program which includes price controls and rationing is socialistic or communistic and ought to be rejected by every good Christian. It is on this point, I think, that our correspondent is in error and shows a lack of acquaintance with the proper role of government.

One final thought.

To support limited economic controls does not mean to think lightly of work or underestimate initiative. Of course, the country needs production; that is elementary. And it is encouraging to note that output per man-hour, which does not depend alone on the worker's application and industry, rose in 1947, and is still rising. But hard work and production are not a complete answer to inflation, certainly not in the short run, as can be seen in the shoe industry, in textiles, in steel and petroleum. By all means let a man develop his talents, let him look upon his work, whatever it is, as a service he owes to God. Let him use his initiative and vie with his fellows. But let him not forget in the process that he is a member of society and subject to social disciplines. Or that men must be brothers not merely in church but in the marketplace as well.



# Literature & Art

## The Catholic writer's problems

Louis Hasley

The subject treated by Harry Sylvester in the January *Atlantic*, "Problems of the Catholic Writer," is one that I have thought much about, have observed under many appearances, and have encountered in a variety of ways at first and second hand, including those of the college teacher and of my own actual creative process. I cannot claim the authority of accomplishment that is Mr. Sylvester's. Indeed my own miscellaneous periodical writings in verse, criticism and short fiction are negligible by any measure. But though what I wish to say here has close relation to my past experience, I wish it to be judged largely on the score of its own reasonableness.

It will immediately be gathered that I am not in perfect agreement with Mr. Sylvester. That is true. I do actually approve, however, of most of what he says; and wish to praise him for opening up, in what is for the most part excellent fashion, a subject at once subtle, complex and provocative. He has marshaled his points with clarity and somber force. And I know of no one who could, alone, have opened the subject to better view. But it is a subject to which many people may contribute, and must contribute, before a thorough and finally sound set of attitudes can be arrived at. That Mr. Sylvester is aware that his essay could hardly say the last word may, from the nature of the subject, be taken for granted. He will therefore, I am sure, forgive one who can speak only because the biggest words have already been spoken.

First of all, certain latent assumptions that were perhaps well made in the original delivery of his paper under Catholic auspices (at the Sheil School for Social Studies, Chicago, on October 10) could hardly come through to the predominantly non-Catholic audience of the *Atlantic*. In view of the general tenor of the article, to the effect that the Catholic writer has an unusually tough row to hoe, how many non-Catholic readers will remember and will give proper emphasis to the thought contained in the third paragraph of the article—in particular, this aspect of his thought with reference to why no major Catholic writer has emerged in America: "A Catholic culture in other countries has produced writers of distinction or even greatness. There is nothing innate in Catholicism which inhibits the artistic process or blunts its edge. Quite the opposite."

An outsider would hardly gather from the above

matter-of-fact statement—in an article stressing handicaps and difficulties—the immeasurably rich, humanly deep and varied tradition and culture provided through the centuries by the Catholic Church; he would, in fact, be easily led to speculate how long Sylvester would continue to maintain such an unprofitable connection. But the reader who did this would be utterly wrong. Not only is Sylvester himself a deeply earnest Catholic, but all of his three novels to date derive their principal sustenance and force from that same Catholic way of life.

There are two problems concerning the Catholic writer that I wish to discuss before I take up relatively minor disagreements. These I designate as 1) the problem of evil as it affects the Catholic writer himself interiorly, and 2) the matter of Catholic education. The first of these Sylvester does not deal with directly, and his consideration of the second leaves room for some addition as well as modification.

In relation to the problem of evil, I would not be so rash as to assert that the Catholic writer is the only one who aims to attain to a personal sanctification of soul. But it can hardly be denied that one of the unalienable heritages of the Catholic is a systematic, minutely detailed, finely wrought fretwork of principles built up from the Bible and from tradition through many centuries of the most thoroughgoing religious, philosophic and moral exploration. This heritage, if I mistake not, is a vastly greater body of defined dogma and doctrine than that possessed by any other religion. The Catholic is thereby limited in the kind of experience that he may in good faith acquire. Salvation of his own soul being always more important than any achievement as an artist, he may not, for example, deliberately besot himself to write more convincingly of alcoholism; he may not live a lie by posing as an anti-Christian in order to learn more about a certain type of bigotry; he may not commit adultery so as to be able to depict this "occupational disease" of novelists (to use Sylvester's ironic term) more realistically for his readers. In fact, he knows these things are forbidden, no matter what his reason for desiring such experience. When Catholics do these things they cannot plead that moral theologians have taught them that the end justifies the means, for they are not so taught. Their only excuse must be merely that they too are human.

Now any critic—Aristotle, Henry James or the book reviewer for the *Prairie-town Sentinel*—knows that, superior to any mere accumulation of "experience data," is the power to guess the unseen from the seen. And those who cite this important truth are apt to forget that there must be the things seen, often with considerable thoroughness, before the "guess" is apt to be reasonably sure. Nevertheless, we desire Catholic writing to give us a full

and truthful presentation of life, sin included; for, as Cardinal Newman pointed out, we cannot expect a sinless literature of sinful humanity.

Forbidden therefore to fill in certain areas of his experience that may be deficient for his artistic purposes, the Catholic, unless he alters or abandons his project, is thrown upon his imagination. If he has sufficient genius (penetration of motive, understanding of human nature—I assume the talent for expression) he may usually succeed. But even then some failure will almost invariably result from his effort to imagine what his experience does not cover.

Admittedly the problem is here speculative. But for the fiction writer it is real. Will an intense, prolonged imaginative effort to realize concretely the sense of a particular sin have an effect on his soul similar to that of a commission of the sin itself? It would seem altogether possible. A study of Herman Melville may offer some confirmation. In the writing of *Moby Dick* he boldly steeped his imagination in the idea of a sinister, malevolent evil at the heart of the universe, and this spirit is one which that book powerfully achieved. (It was, he said, a book "broiled in hellfire.") But does not the baffled, wounded, despairing rage of *Pierre*, the book that followed a year later, attest that his soul had paid the devil's own price for the work so well realized in *Moby Dick*? So far as the best twentieth-century non-Catholic fiction is concerned, however, it is all too rarely that one finds a writer whose work testifies a belief that he has a soul that can be so damaged by any act of its own.

The matter of Catholic literary education is one that Mr. Sylvester analyzes at some length and with exceptional insight. But I find no attempt to reconcile, on the one hand, the literary mis-education that has failed to produce major writers and, on the other, the wide American Catholic recognition (it has admittedly been non-Catholic, too) that has been accorded to foreign Catholic artists like Undset, Mauriac, Bernanos, Chesterton, Waugh, Greene—and many another. There may be a way of reconciling this seeming contradiction—for the creative mind is not the same as the appreciative mind, even though they sometimes co-exist in the same person—but Sylvester's article seems unaware of the problem.

Yet his own data suggest a solution in the literalism of a propaganda-minded Catholic education and press, the principal source of which, as someone has pointed out, may be "the last stronghold of American Puritanism," the Irish Catholic clergy. It appears logical that such a climate would frustrate the creative mind, even while permitting considerable appreciation of work done by great artists under other and more favorable conditions.

After his detailed account of an all-pervasive immature and superficial Catholic literary education that praised as good writing what it thought good propaganda and damned as bad writing whatever it thought bad propaganda, Mr. Sylvester goes ahead to account for it as follows: "The high schools and colleges which most of us attended inculcated this principle of criticism in one fashion or another. *It was obviously the creation of peculiarly undiscerning people.*" [My italics.]

Here I must protest the unwarranted intellectual black eye dealt the teachers of the era referred to—the 'twenties and presumably several decades preceding them. (Being now a teacher myself, I dislike inheriting a black eye.) Large, pervasive, cultural defects in a broad society, I would insist, are hardly to be saddled upon certain individuals and those individuals labeled as "peculiarly undiscerning people." If they had their faults, must we blame them for not being made of uncommon or heroic stuff—for, in fact, reflecting the whole context of the life of which they themselves were in large measure the product? If the background pictured is as woful as he says, I feel that at least some of his own teachers must have risen well above their origins to have tutored in the same class at Notre Dame two such creative artists as Richard Sullivan and Harry Sylvester.

To carry my friendly differences with Mr. Sylvester a bit further, I should like to question the implied reason why certain writers left the Church, assuming the truth of his assertion that they once belonged. He writes:

But no—our teachers indulged their wishful thinking, so that the taste of writers and serious readers who remained in the Church was often confused and emasculated, while a good many others felt that Catholicism was not for them if they were to write honestly or even to read honestly. I need only mention the names of Katherine Anne Porter, Ernest Hemingway, James T. Farrell, and John O'Hara to suggest how many former Catholics are numbered among the top-flight American writers.



Now the reasons why people are converted to the Church, as many converts including Newman and, more recently, Clare Luce and Gretta Palmer have testified, are not simple, and I think it logical that movement the other way has some complexity of motivation. At any rate, the surface

reason is frequently not the real reason, or at least not the only reason. The creative artist's ego and the rigor of the Church's moral attitudes in curbing the free range of the writer's natural appetite for experience (take *natural* both ways) are probably much more frequent reasons for a writer's apostatizing than the belief that he cannot "write honestly or even . . . read honestly" and remain in the Church.

I have yet two more points to make. In what might perhaps have been a praiseworthy effort to overlook no fruitful angle of his subject, Mr. Sylvester, on two occasions, lays at the door of Catholics (who are, it must be remembered, a minority group in this country) shortcomings that should have been given wider reference and explanation. The "bad habits" which account for "pastors and their lay confrères paying more money for bad and even dangerous machine-made church art than they would have to pay for honest and original carving by one of an increasing number of distinguished Catholic craftsmen" should not, in my opinion, be ascribed to any peculiarly Catholic art illiteracy so much as to the whole

condition of art education and culture in the United States. I would, further, rally to the defense of the Catholic spouses of artists. Mr. Sylvester says that "Catholics do not generally make good spouses to artists. . . ." I quoted this sentence to my colleague, psychologist Walter L. Wilkins. His comment, brief and final, was, "Who does?"

In my remarks I am afraid I have left myself open to a criticism by Mr. Sylvester similar to that which I used against his article at the outset—that of misleading my

readers by stressing unfavorable matters and giving too little emphasis to the favorable ones. If so, let me here repair the injury. Lacking the space to single out the great number of points made by Mr. Sylvester that deserve praise for their perspicuity, I can best refer the reader again to his article in the January *Atlantic*. There he may read and ponder (not, I hope, without some help from my own remarks) his courageous and perceptive, if somewhat inconclusive, statement of the "Problems of the Catholic Writer."

## Books

### *Irish Catholic Demosthenes*

BOURKE COCKRAN

By James McGurrian. Scribner. 361p. \$3.50

It is difficult to find a more inviting subject for a biography than Bourke Cockran. Mr. James B. McGurrian, president-general of the American Irish Historical Society, is to be felicitated in that he seized the opportunity and has not confused the abundant material. His fluent, lively narrative is a worthy answer to the challenge of Sir Shane Leslie in his foreword:

Who shall lift the scenes of Bourke Cockran's life and drop the curtain with the same perfect and resplendent precision with which his last day was rounded on earth? Who shall enumerate the mighty figures amongst whom he lived his fierce and fertile, flaming and faithful public life?

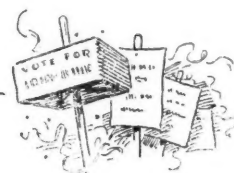
When in February, 1904, Cockran represented the 12th District of New York State in Congress and made his famous reply to Representative John Dalzell, who had charged him with receiving compensation for his political campaign, Cockran's triumphant speech drew more than four thousand congratulatory messages from this country, Ireland, Canada and other countries abroad.

"The days of the orators have gone," says Sir Shane Leslie, "but in the majestic line of Irish eloquence from Burke and Grattan to O'Connell and finally to Redmond there must be a niche for Bourke Cockran." There is a niche in this reviewer's mind, recalling over the years the impression Cockran made when as a lad I heard him speak in the famous Madison Square Garden rally of 1896. He was the one human being who could swing with his matchless eloquence an audience that

was then hypnotized by William J. Bryan.

It was at five minutes to two in the morning at the Democratic Convention of 1892 that Cockran protested, "I am worn out physically and in no condition to address the Convention. I ask the indulgence of the delegates that we take a recess until 10:30 tomorrow." After ten hours of continuous session the exhausted delegates, eager for a speedy adjournment, were demanding a roll call. But in a few minutes Cockran had completely forgotten the fatigue and held the crowd spellbound for nearly an hour with his golden-tongued denunciation of candidate Grover Cleveland.

As Dr. John H. Finley wrote in the *New York Times*: "The splendor of Bourke Cockran's oratory often obscured the solid talent that underlay his genius." His reversal of the judgment of Judge Barrett in the Sharp Case so moved Elihu Root that he rushed over to Cockran and, with much feeling, said: "For God's sake, Bourke, stick to the law and give up



politics. If you do, I predict that in less than ten years you will be recognized as the greatest lawyer in America."

But he could no more keep out of politics than a fish could keep out of water, although politics presented to him their own insuperable difficulty. Party fidelity frequently crossed lines with his passionate crusading spirit, which made him come out for the underdog irrespective of party, creed or color.

As a loyal Democrat, Cockran refused to accept a Republican candidacy for Congress, yet twice Cockran

broke with Tammany and was Richard Croker's most powerful antagonist. His famous defense of Tom Mooney and Warren K. Billings in the California courts was made without any thought of political advantage, and his forthright condemnation of Governor Stevens' action in commuting instead of pardoning the prisoners remains an historic declaration in the field of human rights.

The events of later history cast an ironical light on some of the causes which Bourke Cockran so ardently espoused, such as the Boer War and his denunciation, at the time of the Spanish War, of "Spanish imperialism." Yet the same Cockran strove as representative of Archbishop Corrigan of New York to persuade the Spaniards to a course which, if a more prudent leadership had prevailed, would have averted the tragic conflict. An ardent defender of justice for the Negro, Cockran found himself in considerable embarrassment when he learned the implications of his speech at Montgomery, Alabama, where he advocated the abolition of the 15th Amendment on the ground that it was not being observed anyhow and so could not be of any value to the members of the colored race.

As an outstanding layman Bourke Cockran's religion was not the parade of a scheming politician but was the deep conviction of a man who lived an intense spiritual life far above earthly vicissitudes. Mr. Cockran was one of the founders of the Society of the Perpetual Adoration in New York City. In view of his controversial abilities, it is regrettable that he is not living today. Out of three hundred manuscripts he left behind, sixty are on religious subjects.

It is a temptation to cite incident after incident out of this very delightful book. May I say in conclusion that scholarly Mr. McGurrian has prepared a feast and a treat. I congratulate all those who would sit down at his intellectual table. JOHN LAFARGE



## Responsibilities shared = peace

### THE UNION CHALLENGE TO MANAGEMENT CONTROL

By Neil W. Chamberlain. Harper. 329p. \$4.50

There are a number of reasons why the relationship presently existing in the big corporations between labor and management resembles an armed truce. The chief reason, however, is the absence of mutual trust. Management fears that the persistent efforts of powerful unions to enlarge the area of collective bargaining are jeopardizing its prerogatives and shaking the pillars of

the free-enterprise system. Labor fears—and its fears were sharpened by almost unanimous management support for the Taft-Hartley Act—that the huge corporations which dominate the nation's basic industries have not yet abandoned hope of returning to the good old—that is, non-union—days. In neither case is the fear without foundation.

This lack of mutual trust may be attributable in part to personal failings on both sides—to jealousy, envy, selfishness, lust for power—but it is even more attributable to a factor over which present-day labor and management have at best only a partial con-

trol. That factor is the historic framework of American industry as it has evolved over the past century and more. Ultimately it is the concept of private property enshrined in the corporate laws of the States, and the impact on that concept of various other laws enacted by the Federal Government and the States.

According to the State laws of incorporation, management is solely responsible in its conduct of the business to those from whom it derives its rights, that is, the corporation's stockholders. But during the past quarter-century Congress and a number of State legislatures have legalized the right of workers to organize and have imposed on management a duty to bargain collectively with them. This means that management, under corporate law, has at the same time a legal responsibility only to stockholders, and, under other laws, a legal responsibility toward employees! Furthermore, the nature of this latter responsibility remains vague, with the result that management is constantly faced with the problem of resisting union efforts to broaden it at the expense of its sole responsibility, under corporate law, to the stockholders. Hence the strenuous efforts by management to set limits on the area of collective bargaining and to gain the recognition by unions of exclusive managerial prerogatives.

On their part, union leaders have opposed the attempt to restrict collective bargaining, arguing that they have a responsibility to protect the interests of their members, and that they cannot discharge this responsibility in all circumstances if their field of action is too rigid and restricted. In many cases where unions have agreed to a "management clause" in the collective-bargaining contract, they have done so because they had no other recourse. They have not relinquished the right to raise the question again in future negotiations.

This fundamental conflict between labor and management is the subject matter of *The Union Challenge to Management*, surely one of the most important books in the field of industrial relations to appear in recent years. This high praise is offered not merely because the book comes to grips with a most fundamental issue, but even more because it deals with that issue in a clear, masterly and objective manner. In every way it is an admirable sequel to E. Wight Bakke's short but significant study, *Mutual Survival*, which was also the fruit of the substantial work

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Mr. Chamberlain sees no solution to the fundamental controversy between labor and management in the current effort of some powerful managements—typified by General Motors—to define the limits of collective bargaining. In his view:

Solution of the problem of union-management relations must be based on a functional integration which conceives of the enterprise as composed of its various interest groups and builds its organization around them and encompassing them.

If this involves a change in corporate law, whereby there would be imposed on management, in addition to its responsibility to the stockholders, a legal responsibility towards its employees and the public, it would impose on labor leaders added responsibilities, too. If functional integration is ever achieved, unions will be made legally responsible

to the stockholders and the general public, as well as to their members. In responsibilities thus shared, argues the author, lies hope for industrial peace.

I missed in this fine study any reference to the extensive work on the subject—much of it inspired by the encyclical of Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*—which has been done in Europe over the past fifteen years. It might surprise Mr. Chamberlain to know that one day last summer in Brussels a leader of the Christian Trade Unions outlined to this reviewer a plan for functional integration which closely resembles the scheme described on page 222 of this book.

It is impossible to close this review without expressing a regret that works of this type are not emanating in notable numbers from our Catholic universities. By reason of their philosophy, they are well equipped to shed light on the fundamental problem analyzed in this book. BENJAMIN L. MASSE

## Thumbs firmly down

### RAINTREE COUNTY

By Ross Lockridge, Jr. Houghton Mifflin. 1066p. \$3.95

According to the Book-of-the-Month Club judges, who sent it out as their January selection, and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, who paid the author \$125,000 for screen rights, this may well be "the great American novel." The reviews have been ecstatic. In the opinion of one reviewer, bedeviled—and I mean bedeviled!—by batting his way through *Raintree County's* 1066 pages of bombast, *voyeurism*, rank obscenity, materialistic philosophy and blasphemous impudicity, this book not only fails artistically, but patently falls within the general prohibition of the Index. It is a book inimical to faith and morals. For most readers it may well be a proximate occasion of sin.

If you believe in sin, that is. Mr. Lockridge does not. Nor does his fictional counterpart, John Wickliff Shawnessy, who, in the fashion of Joyce's *Ulysses*, has his whole life reviewed within the compass of one day, July 4, 1892. But in the reviewing of that life, which, set in a mythical Indiana County, is designed to be a symbol of the growing pains of America, there is no real conflict, no conscience and no compassion.

One could feel lots of the last for Mr. Lockridge, laboring five years to write a novel without any of these

three essential elements. There is a certain amount of surface conflict—a foot race, which makes a neat short story, and the standard Civil War scenes—but there is no clash, no friction between good and evil to strike a spark. There is no awareness of the supernatural, and therefore no true conscience and compassion, in John's Bunyanesque pilgrimage through the American Dream to the shrine of Humanity incarnate, the procreative "raintree" of the Shawmucky River, of the Great Swamp, of Lake Paradise. Replete with sexual allegory, the book is curiously unaware of love. Sentimental and unintegrated and unbelievably voluble, in the manner of Wolfe, the story is thereby, I suppose, typically American. But virtue and God apparently had a bad time in America from 1844 to 1892. The dice were loaded for Dan Webster's devil, did he indeed exist.

The devil had a lot to do, none the less, with the writing and promotion of this book. Its literary pretensions are considerable but debatable and, in my opinion, exaggerated because of Mr. Lockridge's shameless parodying of Joyce, Wolfe, Whitman, Faulkner, Proust, Dos Passos and others whose styles make an uneasy amalgam. Besides John, the characters include Garwood B. Jones, who grows up to be a pompous senator; "Cash" Carney, symbol of the predatory financier; and Jerusalem Webster Styles, the "Professor." The Professor is the most

## MID-LENT SLUMP

is something that hits us every year and we have an idea that others, too, get a feeling about now that all this penance seems to be going on a long time. Should you, by any chance, be suffering from this complaint, we suggest the following books as remedies. They are not, strictly speaking, spiritual reading, but they are, each in its own way, wonderfully arousing:

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Of which you have already heard. Priests sit up nights to finish it (and laymen, too, but that is less startling, they don't have to get up for the 6:30 Mass).

### THE DRY WOOD

by Caryl Chessler (\$3.00)

A novel abounding in portraits of the clergy. We seem to recognize each one, their holiness and peculiarities, their complete difference from each other. This is an oddly moving story, not much plot, but the characters stay with you as if you had known them for years.

### FISHERS OF MEN

by Maxence van der Meersch (\$3.00)

A fierce sort of novel about the French Jockists, how little they could achieve before the war, and why. But how wonderful it was, given the conditions, that they achieved anything at all!

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by Katherine de Hueck (\$1.75)

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sympathetically presented character in the novel, and the author had a field day writing his racy, obscene, blasphemous talk. No reviewer has, so far as I know, called attention to the Professor's extremely objectionable attack on Christianity and Our Lord and His Mother, on page 1027 and thereabouts. It is horrifying to think that these sacrilegious passages, to which the author furnishes no counterbalance, lie within reach of many a Catholic.

As to the book's promotion, MGM will doubtless cast Gable as Shaw-nessy, or perhaps Gregory Peck will swim in the Shawmucky instead of the "Sump," with a succession of Mr. Lockridge's indecorous women. Hollywood will capitalize on the title and gut the book. But in the most measured and temperate terms possible I want to call the turn for this one on the Book-of-the-Month Club and its panel, Clifton Fadiman, Henry Seidel Canby, Dorothy Canfield, John P. Marquand and Christopher Morley. In their advance notices each of them praised *Raintree County* without qualification. They are getting careless—or bolder. For, before mailing out Steinbeck's *The Wayward Bus*, Mr. Canby sounded a cautionary note for "parents of teen-age children," and Mr. Fadiman warned that *The Story of Mrs. Murphy* contained unchaste language and pictures of squalor, brutality and degeneracy. All Mr. Canby has to say to readers who must choose or not choose *Raintree County* is:

On the human, on the animal side, also, this is an amorous book. It is as salty as the talk among men in a livery stable of the old Republic. It is sensual without being verbally dirty. It is frank but no more offensive than the hearty talk of any small town. It is a thousand miles away from the decadence of a night-club innuendo.

That, Mr. Canby, is a thousand miles away from the truth. Having been overseas as a service chaplain I am not easily shocked; but in the Army we knew that obscenity—and blasphemy—are not merely relatively offensive. A noxious bit of caginess, by the way, was the book club's altering of the lewd jacket in the bookstore windows to a Victorian, well-clothed Adam and Eve flanking a snake with an apple in its mouth. I have long doubted the literary discrimination of the Book-of-the-Month club judges. *Raintree County* is the one rotten apple that ruins their whole barrel for me. From now on I choose my own books.

ALFRED BARRETT

#### DAVID LILIENTHAL: Public Servant in a Power Age.

By Willson Whitman. Holt. 245p. \$3

David Lilienthal's name will be forever linked with the Tennessee Valley Authority. People who date world changes from the great industrial expansion of the United States during the first World War should note that, in the second, the power production of TVA was equal to half the production of the entire country in World War I. The TVA construction program was the largest single construction program ever undertaken in the country. Lilienthal remarked that it was "as if you were building eight Boulder dams at one time, or, in terms of men on the job, as if you were building three Grand Coulees."

Before World War II was over, TVA was to get annual power production up to nearly twelve billion kilowatt-hours. Muscle Shoals produced, besides elemental phosphorus and ammonium nitrate for munitions and fertilizer, calcium carbide for synthetic rubber. TVA research projects, from food products to clays for spark plugs, took on new usefulness.

In Miss Whitman's opinion, the fight against Lilienthal for the atomic-energy post, on the ground that he was a left-winger, was absurd; but it did mean that Congress thought the candidate could not be controlled. The people working hardest against him were people believing earnestly not merely in free enterprise but in the right of industry to tell the government what to do. The core of opposition to Lilienthal was in the fact that responsible administration of atomic-energy control would curb private exploitation of the new processes.

This book is not a biography, but the story of a man's work in public service as it appears to a member of the public. Its sources are not in private records but in public documents. There is, as a consequence, very little in this small volume that Lilienthal himself has not made a matter of record, very little in the way of character analysis and scarcely anything about the current operations of the United States Atomic Energy Commission. Yet for all its limitations, Miss Whitman has contrived to present an interesting and sympathetic digest of the career of a distinguished public servant.

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JOHN J. O'CONNOR

LOUIS HASLEY, who has contributed poetry frequently to our columns, is a professor of English and assistant dean at Notre Dame University.

REV. ALFRED J. BARRETT, S.J., the well-known poet, was an Army chaplain during the war. He is now Director of the Publication Division of the School of Communication Arts at Fordham University.

JOHN J. O'CONNOR, former professor of history at St. John's University, Brooklyn, is now professor of history at Georgetown University.

We are slightly red-faced over a wrong credit given in our last issue. *The World's Great Lakes* was here stated as reviewed by J. Nicholas Shriver—it was William H. Shriver who did the review. Sorry, Messrs. Shriver!

## The Word

COLLAPSE IN ADULT LIFE IS A theme that engrosses the interest of the psychologist. Relapse into serious sin is a threat that deserves the earnest attention of each of us. The kindly Christ warns us of the dread possibility in the gospel of the third Sunday of Lent.

"Life and death in a stupendous conflict strove. The Prince of Life, who died, now lives and reigns." So shall we sing on Easter morning, proclaiming Christ's conquest, His overcoming and despoiling of Satan by His death on the cross, His life made available to men. At baptism that life, through sanctifying grace, became ours, and another battle in the unending war against Satan began on another sector—for the possession of our individual, imperishable souls. For the restless spirit, driven from us at baptism by

Christ in the person of the priest, roams about, returning incessantly to seek entry and domicile in the dominion of the soul—which he arrogantly calls "my house"—that has been cleaned and garnished with grace. He has reserves and resources sevenfold. Should we completely succumb and fall into mortal sin, we have Christ's judgment of us: "the last state of that man becomes worse than the first."

"Everyone has the kiss of Judas on his lips and may one day give it," Msgr. Benson observed ominously. Lent is a time to face up to that fact, refurbish our resolves of loyalty to God and fix on a permanent strategy. Today's Mass offers many fruitful suggestions.

Basically, we need a faithful love of Christ, a trusting love "as most dear children" of Him who loved us to the point of offering His life for us—as St. Paul reminds us in today's epistle. That love must be made of sterner stuff than sentiment. Christ, our Elder Brother, is not a companionable equal, complacent of our opinionatedness if we but protest our affection. We must have an abiding reverence for God's majesty, a mindfulness that He owns us utterly, a mindfulness that fixes our eyes on God's will "as the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters," submissive to God's law. So the psalmist in the tract of today's Mass directs.

That supposes not merely a willingness to obey but an eagerness to learn, a ready acceptance of the truth that, if we are not with Christ and His judgment on things, we are to that extent "against Him," "scattering" when we should be "gathering" with Him, enlarging His Kingdom on earth in the realm of economic life, of holiness in the home, of peace among men. The bishops in their Statement on Secularism last fall described the kind and consequences of unmindfulness of God that weakens us against the assaults of Satan.

To the humility inculcated by the introit's cry for mercy, the joyousness promised in the offertory verse must be added to our armory against Satan. Discouragement weakens our defenses; it denies us the security that should be ours from the conviction that we have been rescued, that Christ is "the stronger one."

It would be foolish to fear sin so timorously as to exaggerate Satan's power. It would be foolhardy to neglect the needed weapon of penance recommended in the preface in the

ceaseless combat for salvation. For penance is a decisive demonstration of our sorrow for sin, of our dependence on God for help, of our determination to put ourselves in second place. Obviously it is not the burden of the hurt or the bulk of the inconveniences of our Lenten penances that count, but the direction of the will they display, displacing self, disciplining our emotions. Perhaps, then, we might most profitably consider penances that oppose our prejudices, that discommode our private arrangements: the penance, for instance, that would punish our judgment and treatment of people on the un-Christlike basis of position or power or prestige—or, perhaps, color.

EDWARD DUFF, S.J.

## Theatre

LADY OF FATIMA, presented by The Blackfriars, offers theatregoers profitable as well as entertaining diversion for Lent. Rev. Urban Nagle, O. P., is the author, and his story is a factual

transcript of the events that followed the appearance of the Blessed Virgin to three children in rural Portugal. Four gentlemen, each with a claim to scholarship, are engaged in conversation over wine-glasses when the host mentions the miracle. The group includes a French journalist of liberal views, a priest and an American psychiatrist; and while they discuss the credibility and significance of the event, the participants fade out of the picture at intervals while the original story is enacted by the characters who lived it.

Without taking second thought, I would say *Lady of Fatima* is the most tastefully mounted of the Friars' plays that I recall, with simple but effective sets by David Reppa and costumes by Irene Griffin that made me envious of the male characters. Dennis Gurney's direction may be a little slow in pacing, but that is a point on which I cannot afford to be dogmatic, since my knowledge of the director's art is only slightly less rudimentary than my skill in performing tricks in black magic or candling eggs. The large cast, which enacts thirty-two roles and also provides atmosphere, includes too many capable performances for mention, except that Anna Stubits, Nomi Mitty and Edward Villella, the children who were visited by The Lady, remind one of Our Lord's saying that "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," without appearing too good for an occasional spanking while incarcerated in the flesh. Dennis Gurney, in one of his rare appearances in grease, is an exhilarating intellectual rake.

On the creative side, Father Nagle's play is a drama that will appeal to children and adults with enough imagination to understand the modern world without losing their capacity for wonder, while liberals and alumni of Sunday supplements are likely to regard it as a ridiculous lapse into superstition. The play will continue in production until March 24.

NEW STAGES. Due to the fact that I have either lost or misplaced the play bill, there may be some inaccuracies in the following sentences, and no production credits, save one. The New Stages' current billing consists of two short plans: *Church Street* by Lennox Robinson, and *The Respectful Prostitute* by Jean Paul Sartre.

Of *Church Street*, just this: it is an ingratiating, thoughtful and slightly acid play of the sort the author is expert in writing.

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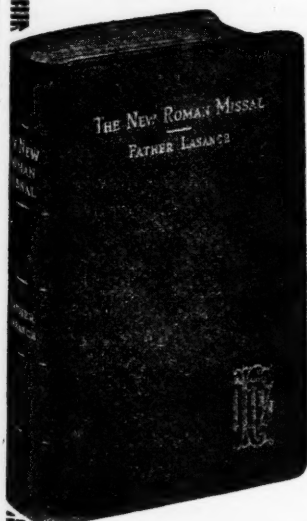
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Mr. Sartre must be a smart foreigner, probably a prodigy in his non-age; for he has certainly come up with a shrewd analysis of the psychology of lynching and, more important, he has captured its stark drama. There are moments when he is tripped by inadequate briefing, as when he refers to white men and Negroes fighting in a day coach, when the latter would be in the Jim Crow car, and his treatment of Negro character is almost absurdly naive; but such lapses are few and inconspicuous, and when he turns his scalpel to dissecting the Caucasian psyche his hand never slips. While his white characters are engaged in a bitter conflict of wills, he strips them down to their emotional skeletons, revealing the guilts and frustrations at the root of the racist mania that involves them in a struggle rising to a macabre crescendo.

THEOPHILUS LEWIS

## Films

CALL NORTHSIDE 777. This latest in Twentieth Century-Fox's stimulating dramatizations, documentary style, of actual incidents deals with the ramifications of a miscarriage of justice. Though somewhat loosely organized, it is a moving account of ordinary people facing a calamity too great for them to cope with and, in addition, it furnishes a balanced and thought-provoking analysis of a number of American institutions. A newspaper ad offering a \$5,000 reward for information about the eleven-year-old murder of a policeman sends a reporter (James Stewart) to interview an immigrant scrub-woman who has toiled through the years in the hope of proving that her son (Richard Conte) was falsely imprisoned for the crime. Writing sob stuff about the trusting mother of a cop-killer sticks in the reporter's craw, but he stays on the case. Visits to the convict, to his wife—divorced and remarried for the sake of some measure of security and a new start for her young son—and to the police and court records—mutely testifying to an anti-crime campaign more interested in quick convictions than justice—gradually change his opinion, and his circulation-boosting human-interest series assumes the proportions of a finally successful crusade of exoneration. Photographed almost entirely in and

around Chicago—the locale of its real-life counterpart—the picture's realistic background serves to enhance its dramatic effect, notably in the scenes in Statesville prison and in the reporter's hair-raising encounter with a key witness in the Skid Row slum area. A lie-detector test and the transmission of vital evidence through a Wirephoto add contemporary touches to the sustained visual suspense. Performances by a largely stage-recruited cast are admirably muted, and the film's compassionate and penetrating study of complex human motives is marred only by its glossing-over of the moral tragedy involved in the divorce and remarriage of the convict's wife. (*Twentieth Century-Fox*)

**MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA.** Eugene O'Neill's marathon re-working of the classic Greek Orestia trilogy was a strange choice to open Dudley Nichol's one-man campaign to improve the artistic level of the screen. The ancient legend of a family driven by the displeasure of the gods to adultery, murder and suicide on a mass-production scale gave free rein to the playwright's greatest asset, his ability to impart a lyric and impassioned sense of reality to characters in the grip of larger-than-life emotions. His other consuming interest—abnormal psychology—replaces the vengeance of the gods as motivation; but this heavily Freudian network of hate and fear complexes reduces the theme from inevitable tragedy to melodrama, which, however, still leans heavily for its effectiveness on the classic form. In his screen adaptation, Nichols was understandably fearful of tampering with this form and was content to photograph a somewhat edited and less vehemently outspoken version of the play. The theatrical construction gives a verbose and artificial quality to the film which, added to its unsavory subject matter, however maturely unsensational in handling, will hardly find favor with any large segment of moviegoers. Rosalind Russell in the enormously difficult central role acquits herself surprisingly well, though she is overshadowed by some of her more appropriately schooled fellow players, among whom Michael Redgrave and Katina Paxinou are most impressive. *Adults* who are serious students of the drama should find it of considerable academic interest, but a milestone in the development of the screen it definitely is not. (RKO)

MOIRA WALSH

## Parade

IT SEEMED AS THOUGH CURRENT history were trying to dress up human behavior with a new look, so different in form and content, were the week's events from the usual run of behavior patterns. . . . This nonconformity to the ordinary designs for living was visible everywhere. . . . Even sleepers reacted to stimuli in unusual ways. . . . A Los Angeles veteran, in a dream, saw Japanese machine-guns charging at him. Dreading capture, the veteran jumped out of bed, leaped through the window of his fourth-floor hotel room, crashed through a skylight, landed safe on a sofa in the lobby below. . . . A new version of driving a coach-and-six through things was developed. . . . In Texas, a driver ran his big truck right through a restaurant wall, came to a halt by the cash register. . . . Odd types of trances were conceived. . . .

A London, England, welterweight fighter, fearful concerning his chances of beating the champion in a scheduled title bout, engaged a hypnotist to give him confidence. Into the dozing fighter's ear, the hypnotist whispered: "You're going to lick the bum . . . you're going to lick the bum." Having completed his course of six trances, the fighter entered the ring, and immediately went into another trance, lost every round to the bum. . . . Smells were streamlined. . . . A Connecticut perfume manufacturer announced he would sow perfumed dry ice crystals over Bridgeport, and thus produce the first sweet-smelling snow storm in history. . . . In Illinois, a college professor revealed he had succeeded in deodorizing Limburger cheese by excluding smelly bacteria from the cheese, admitting only the unsmelly kind. . . . Written excuses assumed unconventional forms. . . . In Indiana, a teacher received a mother's note: "My boy has a bad cold in his bronchial tubes and a scientist infection." . . . Oral alibis also followed the unconventional pattern. . . . In court for hitting his wife with a piece of two-by-four lumber, a New York husband told the judge: "Your honor, I only hit her lightly." His Honor replied: "In that case, I'll give you a light sentence. Sixty days." . . . Crusading methods previously untried were placed in operation. . . . An Ellensburg, Wash., citizen, desirous of spreading good-will

for America among peoples everywhere, felt he could best achieve this purpose by personally pushing a radio-equipped wheelbarrow around the world. By last week, he had covered 6,000 miles, and worn out ten pair of shoes, a set of rubber tires on his wheelbarrow. . . . Concern for the future was exhibited. . . . In Seattle, a man called "the modern Noah," who expects another deluge in 1952, finished building an ark. . . . Here and there, a chain reaction of surprises was set off. . . . A little, thirteen-year-old boy decorated with a mustache was observed walking around Newark, N. J.

He was trying to join the National Guard, wanted to look old. . . . In Pennsylvania, the vice-president of a Planned Parenthood Clinic gave birth to triplets.

Each week, new human behavior patterns take form. . . . Every pattern produced by an individual becomes part of a full-length, biographical moving picture, mirroring the life and work of that individual. . . . The movie will have its premiere showing on Judgment Day. . . . On that day, it will be reviewed by the Great Judge.

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by

**Robert C. Hartnett, S.J.**

Director of Dept. of Political Science

at the University of Detroit

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# Correspondence

## *Vs. health insurance*

EDITOR: Your editorial, "Judging health insurance," in the Jan. 24 issue of AMERICA is misleading, and misses the crux of the problem.

You assert that "public medical care, provided for the 'needy' in various cities, is no solution to the problem, nor is it as extensive as they imagine." First, this is an assertion without proof. Second, it misses the whole argument concerning compulsory health insurance. Such insurance is a tax imposed upon employer and employe, as envisioned by its proponents. The "needy" are unemployed and would remain, as now, wards of government.

You say "we could conceivably have the maximum freedom for the medical profession and still have a compulsory pre-payment plan." Granted that it is "conceivable," it is not what Messrs. Wagner, Murray and Dingell have planned in the various compulsory health-insurance bills they have jointly introduced into the Congress at each session since 1939. The history of such health-insurance laws in all countries where they are in existence is that the medical profession is not free and must practise medicine according to government rules. The one exception is New Zealand. Even there every effort is being made by the socialist government to change to the panel system.

You state: "The only real question is to decide whether or not such insurance provides a satisfactory and feasible answer to an unsatisfactory situation." That is only one feature of the whole problem. Father Alphonse Schwitalla, S. J., President of the Catholic Hospital Association, testifying before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, May 6, 1946 regarding compulsory health insurance, said: "As I see it, centralized control [of health insurance] would be inevitable, and that means control through regulation; and control through regulation means a curtailment of freedom of action; such a curtailment, in turn, means a loss of interest in one's professional activities."

Father Schwitalla raises another important question regarding compulsory health insurance when he says: "The compulsion of which we are here

speaking implies the giving up of considerable freedom and the relinquishment of considerable responsibility. To make a strong nation requires that man must be given responsibility rather than to have responsibility taken away from him."

Still another point raised by Father Schwitalla is that compulsory health insurance could be used for birth-control programs.

Space does not permit a detailed discussion of the problems raised by compulsory health insurance. It seems obvious that the problem is not as simple as you have stated. To the medical profession the real question is the danger of medicine becoming a political football, and the high standards of the profession becoming seriously lowered, as they have in those countries which have state health insurance. To the taxpayer the real question is the huge cost of another bureaucracy to administer the program. To the thoughtful citizen, who knows modern social history, the real fear lies in the fact that the first step toward socialism and communism has been the socialization of medicine by compulsory health insurance.

JOHN G. SLEVIN, M.D.

Detroit, Mich.

## *Loyalty tests*

EDITOR: Father Keenan's "Loyalty tests for federal employes" (AMERICA, January 17) says that the loyalty test "is accepted, by those who do accept it, as a disagreeable necessity imposed on us by the brute realities of the world we live in." And Father Keenan is one who accepts it; in fact, embraces it—pretty rapturously.

By the way, is there really much difference between his quoted language and that ogre: "The end justifies the means"? The article speaks loftily of "disagreeable necessity." The author views the inherent and incurable evils of the loyalty-test program from the complacent and currently safe vantage point of one who will not be a defendant against its process. But an editor, especially an editor of a religious review, has no permanent immunity against so-called loyalty tests. Today he may have immunity, but he should test his own editorial

complacency under the hypothesis of a like loyalty-test program, created by executive order, embracing editors, especially editors of religious periodicals and, more particularly, editors of Catholic reviews. In that hypothesis, he might not be willing to say so casually: "In the concrete it is not likely that any serious injustice will be done."

The admiration of Father Keenan and Mr. Walter Winchell for Mr. J. Edgar Hoover ought to be confined to his undoubted success in collaring kidnapers, bank-robbers and Mann Act violators, aided occasionally by third-degree strong-arm techniques. There is no reason to suppose that a police officer, adept as he may be in sleuthing Kansas outlaws, has any qualifications or competency to evaluate political thought.

DANIEL G. MARSHALL

Los Angeles, Calif.

EDITOR: I do not think that a fair reading of my article would sustain the contention that I "embrace" the loyalty program "pretty rapturously."

Mr. Marshall seems to have misconceived the role of the FBI, though I thought that the article made it fairly clear. The FBI, it is there stated, does not make an indictment, but only presents the facts, both favorable and unfavorable, concerning the employe under investigation. I italicized the point that the Review Board should have access to all the witnesses and that the FBI should not be the final court of appeal. It was with this proviso that I accepted the loyalty program, but by no means "rapturously."

Confrontation of witnesses is one of the great safeguards of the accused. Its aim is to secure justice. It is possible (though certainly more difficult) to secure justice without it. In that case there is an added burden on the wisdom, restraint and objectivity of the judge; and, it may be added, on the vigilance of the people. This, I think, is clear from my article. It is not a case of "the end justifying the means," but of reaching the end without using a given means.

Of course, if a government sets itself to make Catholicism into disloyalty, no one would say that "it is not likely that any serious injustice will be done." I have lived under such a government, and can tell the difference between its attitudes and that of the FBI and the Loyalty Review Board.

(REV.) CHARLES KEENAN, S.J.

New York, N. Y.



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